From Dawn to Dusk

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J. Hunter MacCulloch.

FROM DAWN TO DUSK,

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

HUNTER MACCULLOCH,

AUTHOR OF "HOW JOHN'S WIFE MADE MONEY AT HOME;" "AMOUR," A DRAMA; "EL MAHDI," AN OPERA; "LOVE AND THE LEAF," A CANTATA; ETC.

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TO

MY DEAR WIFE,

FANNIE WINDSOR.

PHILADELPHIA,
October, 1886.

CONTENTS.

FROM DAWN TO DUSK: PAGE

I.—One by One 9
II.—An Overture 9
III.—Life 10
IV.—The Child 12
V.—Youth 12
VI.—The Inexpressible 13
VII.—Self-Communion (The Woman) 15
VIII.—Self-Communion (The Man) 16
IX.—Nature's Art 19
X.—Enthusiasm 20
XI.—Natural Election 21
XII.—Watch, Therefore 23
XIII.—Letter and Spirit 24
XIV.—Horoscope 25
XV.—Anne Brock 26
XVI.—Immortal Man 27
XVII.—A Ballad of Death 27
XVIII.—Life after Death 28
XIX.—The End 29
XX.—Never Again 30

SOLILOQUIES:

Socrates 31
Job 33
Jephthah's Daughter 35
Samson 38
Bacon 41

TO MY WIFE: PAGE
June Days . . . 45
To Fannie . . . 48
One Year After . . . 48
A Husband's Valentine . . . 51
One to the Other . . . 52
You and I . . . 53
Your Love and Mine . . . 54
This Robber Year . . . 55
He and She . . . 55

Labores . . . 57
The Wife's Choice . . . 61
The True Faith . . . 62
Cui Bono? . . . 64
Thanksgiving Day . . . 65
Christmas Day . . . 66
New Year Advice . . . 67
Just One! . . . 68
Flood-tide . . . 69
Her Heart's Desire . . . 70
Next! . . . 71
Centennial, 1876 . . . 73
The Greeting, May 10, 1876 . . . 73
The Farewell, November 10, 1876 . . . 74
The Express Passes . . . 74
Daisies . . . 76
Had I but Known! . . . 76
Tuberose . . . 77
The Conservative Radical . . . 78
Day Thoughts . . . 79
Madonna and Child . . . 80
Courage . . . 81
June's Offering . . . 82
Turned Auchty . . . 82
Body and Soul . . . 84
The Theme . . . 85
All or Nothing . . . 86
Good-by! . . . 87
Before I Go . . . 89
Unframed . . . 90
The End of the World . . . 91
The True Skeptic . . . 92

PAGE

In Time 93
The Unknown God 93
The Time to Weep 94
An Honest Greek 95
Unsophisticated 96
More Life 97

EPIGRAMS:

To-day 97
My Ships 98
The Worst 98
For a Title-page 98
The Bubble 98
The Voice 99
Autumn Leaves 99
May in December 99
The Maiden's Mind 100
Errata 100

SONGS:

The Miller's Son* 101
For Ever and Ever 102
Down the Green Lane* 103
Ebb and Flow* 104
Something in the Air* 104
If Only 106
My Little Bird* 107
Unless I Change my Mind* 108
Beauty about Thee 110
After All* 110
Art without Art 111
Come Sail with Me* 111
Song of the Senses* 112
Song of the Seasons* 113
Away to the Woods! 114
First Love 115
Birthday Morning Serenade 115
Jack and Joe 116
Love's Reveille* 117

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* Has been set to music.

SONGS:—(*Continued.*) PAGE

A Madrigal* 118
Sweet Thoughts of Thee* 118
Here we Go!* 119
Night and Morning 120
Panel and Plaque and Tile* 121
Fairmount Park 122
The Parting Toast* 123

IDYLS OF THE QUEEN:

Robinette 125
Bopeepetine 130

* Has been set to music.

FROM DAWN TO DUSK.

I.—ONE BY ONE.

ONE by one
Years come and go;
Waves form and break;
Ebb follows flow;
Stars sleep and wake—
Even so,
One by one
From out the dark,
Souls emerge;
Through the dusk they steer
Unto life's verge,
Then disappear,
Into the dark,
One by one!
Hark! hark!—
The birthday bell,
And the slow, sad dirge,
Join swell to swell;
For life begun,
For the race that's run,
One by one!

II.—AN OVERTURE.

MUSIC of Life! for which the heart keeps time,
Since at each beat a life somewhere begins;
Another voice joins in the immortal chorus,

To sing an hour or three-score years and ten,
Then cease from singing.
Oh, thou song of songs!
Thy living notes fall in a ceaseless shower,
And the quickened earth is blessed of thee and
blesses;
While merging each in each, thy drops of life
Back to the ocean flow, from whence they rose;
From thence again to rise, again to fall;
And fall and rise while sun and stars endure!

III.—LIFE.

'T is done; and well done, too!
The heart's o'erflow hath reached the eyes;
And through the sweet surprise,
All things are haloed with a rainbow hue!
Not unprepared were we;
But as the death of one who dies
Piecemeal and surely, whom we see
Retreat to the last ditch, yet the blow,
Laying him low,
Seems like a thunderbolt from out the blue:
So Life, with stealthy steps, slips-in,
While breathless we stand hearing;
And while we wonder when he will begin—
Knowing he must be nearing—
Lo! he breathes on us with baby breath,
And thrills us with glad music whose sad undertone
is death!

Oh, Life! thy coming and thy going—
Like falling rain upon the mountain
Rising as mist in ocean's fountain—
Pass through the air of mystery!

Oh, Life ! oh, river through us flowing !
Strangely the soul is stirred by thee !
What art thou ?—what ? So near, so far !
The petty pond in which we peer
Reflects thee as a star ;
And ever at our side some seer
Shouts what and why we are !
And yet, none knows ; for who has thrust
Aside this screen of dust,
And let Life, naked, look on us ?
Unsolved the mystery remains ;
Unborn is Life for all our pains :
We wait thee, Edipus !

Because we know no *why*
For even the meanest "flower
In the crannied wall" hard by,
Or the rounded life of an hour ;
Shall we, so sickened, stop our race,
In deep disgrace ;
And turn a stony eye
And rigid-featured face
To the impenetrable wall ; and die ?
Would it be wise,
To petulantly shut our eyes
To the immediate paradise
Under the skies ?
We keep the common highway ever,
Not greatly changing speed or course ;
For from our heritage how can we sever ?
The Past's inertia proves too great a force :
Yet there is still left to us high endeavor,
And that is living Life's unfailing source.
Behold ! how we are caught
In the fine, strong meshes wrought

By the subtle spinner, Thought!
For thy soul's polar star then set up Duty,
And find in Truth thy wholesome daily food;
Then will thy life be filled with glorious Beauty,
Having that perfect health we name as Good!
So take as motto for thy whole life through:
To know and do!

IV.—THE CHILD.

THOU small, living spark from the fire
Of twin lives that leaped-up as a flame,
Double-branched, and wound 'round and became
One flame with one aim—
Thou art here at the feet of Desire!
Oh, wavering ray!
As weak as the whisper of trees
That tell of the soft, south breeze,
In speech that half dies on the way!

'T is the dawn of thy day;
And the oil that the senses pour
On thy soul in a five-fold way,
From the world-vessel's store,
Will feed thy faint flame till its fluttering feet,
Strengthened and set this life-ladder to climb,
Will reach where the top and the sky seem to meet,
And shine with a light sublime!
But the force and the course of thy upward career
Is a secret known only to time!

V.—YOUTH.

KNIGHT-ERRANT Youth! O rare and noble knight!
Thy open, beardless face as with wine is flushed;
The tumultuous blood, like a newly-prisoned bird,
Now beats in the brain, now flutters in the heart:

And thy speech is tremulous; for thou hast heard
In a vivid vision this impassioned cry:—

Voice of my world-circling soul thou hast come to me;
Leaping from lips that are fashioned word-wise.
Thou makest my myriad voice as if dumb to me;
Drawing me, mist-like, from under all skies!

Now shalt thou speak for me all I shall say by thee:
Passionate protest by finite mouth made!
Here have I come to thee, here shall I stay by thee—
Speak! Though thy speech make all nature afraid!

Now shall the sage and the hero unite in thee:
Knowledge thy shield, and thy keen weapon Truth.
Arise and go forth! How I long to delight in thee!
Strike with a mighty stroke, knight-errant Youth!

Go forth, O Youth! go forth while spirits sparkle!
Go forth while yet the mantling foam endures!
Let hunger and thirst for thought and deed possess thee:
The thought that feeds the newly-kindled fire;
The deed that draws the fascinated soul.
Oh! may thy sun stand ever in the zenith!
Oh! may thy transport never pass away!

VI.—THE INEXPRESSIBLE.

COULD we the fleeting feelings follow fast,
And come upon them where they stand at bay,
And lead them speech-bound back to the broad day,

Ere they dissolved into the vast—
Oh! what perfect poems with them we could cast!
But words are worse than weak;
For when we seek
  To seize some subtle phase of feeling
  That will defy revealing,
Where are they then? Alas!
We watch, we wait, and lo! the visions pass.

The swiftly shifting, bright auroras rise,
  And spread a sheet of quivering light
Across the face of our soul's skies,
  Making the far horizon bright;
One glimpse is given of an enchanting sight,
  And then the radiance dies;
And all the rare, fair beauty with it takes its flight!
The iron of common life,
  In the fierce blast of genius caught
  And made most hot,
Begins an elemental strife:
Chameleonic changes run
  Their course of many-colored thoughts;
And when we see the very one
  That in expression longs so to be wrought—
The supreme moment, unused, speeds away;
The shade fades out and leaves the iron brittle, cold,
      and gray!

The soul is set aglow
By the mind's or senses' lava-flow—
  Music and poetry—
That issues scorching from the vast
  Volcanoes of the soul, when she
Has from the mouth her heated hand unclasped;

By the feeling that the universe inspires:
  Space, with its limitless wan waste;
And Time that nothing tires:
  By that strange Something, double-faced,
Sole substance of all things that are
From grain to star!
  And by the universe of things,
Whose worlds are monstrous instruments that trace
The sky, as if surveying space—
  While the dust of life unto their surface clings!

This fuel that the outer world brings,
  Illumines depths so deep,
Ere we return the light grows dull,
  Nor way nor treasure can we keep—
Alas! how much we feel we find unspeakable.

VII.—SELF-COMMUNION.

(THE WOMAN.)

My soul grows dizzy on the brink
  Of this great thought: How few the years
  Till death—an Edipus—appears,
And this hot brain shall cease to think!

Oh! surely life means something more
  Than this trite round of work and rest;
  A useless treadmill at the best,
If Time has nothing else in store.

From out my being's centre springs
  A hope that ne'er through life will fade,
  Nor needs the dogma's outward aid,
Assuring me of better things.

And while I wait the solemn hour,
I note the actors on the stage,
And estimate each part and wage;
And wonder at the waste of power!

And long to take the prompter's place,
And when they falter cry "Be brave!
All is not lost if Truth you save;"
And educate the human race

To be consistent, and to hear
The call to duty—which will give
Instruction how to rightly live;
And, being learned, cast out all fear.

Oh! be in earnest! Then let Fate
Or smile or frown, you know your part;
Nor can the future fright your heart,
For you can wait—yes, you can wait!

VIII.—SELF-COMMUNION.

(THE MAN.)

THIS day slips-on the finished annual ring
That marks the age while adding to the girth
Of the Tree of Life that springs-up by the hearth,
'Round which, though tall the top, the roots will cling;
And all the leaves this day are quivering
With the wind of thoughts to which the day gives birth,
Stirring the fitful questions of the worth
And use of the fruit that time and seasons bring.
And if this landmark were Life's journey's goal,
The solemn feeling filling now my soul

Is such, indeed, as doomsday may inspire,
When Thought runs backward o'er the distance sped;
The fearless soul being full of one desire:
To feel she followed close when Duty led!

I would not face blank Death with bravado,
Did he stand sentry, crying, "Halt!" this day;
Although to quit my errand and obey
Would strike Life's purpose such a coward blow!
Being warm with life, I would be loth to go
Forth in the cold where never follows ray;
Held here by Love, my soul would shriek out,
"Nay!"
At sight of the knife—both Life's and Love's last foe.
Though ever cruel, Death would be unfair
To thief-like take me prisoner unaware:
Me! who but newly knows Life's questions deep,
And, full of love-health, eager now to try
My utmost powers, until Night's natural sleep,
To find the answer to Life's myriad "Why?"

Should I the world-secret sometime guess,
The answer would but one soul satisfy;
For if I pressed-up Pisgah's side so high,
And saw the truth, like to Man's hand or less,
Loud those below would cry out, "Foolishness!"
And deem me vile to so unseemly spy
The secret parts of Knowledge, and untie
The fig-leaf, Ignorance, that seems to bless.
So Prudence learns the miser's tricks to me:
To hide my treasure where no eye can see,
From whence to draw it forth to count and feel,
When hidden from the murderous World's sharp
sight;

And let my garment's commonness conceal
An under one, with jewels gleaming bright!

The mist Expediency, that hides Truth's sun,
And dims with film the cheerful, healthful light
That floods the Soul's main window facing Right,
Will flee away ere half the day is done.
Nor can the East wind freeze the blood of one
Burning to raise the human mercury's height;
For though he moves not mountains with his might,
He seeks some hill to spend his strength upon.
When cold Neglect has driven him in his shell,
He ponders o'er the truths we know so well:
How Man progresses at a snail's poor speed
Over the weary way to fruit from seed;
And how the coming Golden Age will need
The way made straight by lives innumerable!

While Life is with me will my Soul rejoice,
And be most glad with all she does or sees;
Seeking at first her inward judge to please,
Then hears with tears the outward kindly voice.
And should the World attack my constant choice,
I'll shut the outer gate and drop the keys,
Knowing the Soul can stand a siege with ease;
Being self-contained and heeding not the noise.
While still the Soul will with herself commune,
Nor court nor fear to meet Death late or soon,
Striving to live Life out in the fullest sense;
Giving the living Present everything,
And taking for reward the keen, intense
Enjoyment that her healthful actions bring!

IX.—NATURE'S ART.

In the pause that succeeds unto action
  Comes the wish to discover the springs,
Hid so well that we know not a fraction
  Of the why and the wherefore of things;
Come the old and yet ever new queries,
  That stir us and spur us—a task
Embracing an infinite series
  To ask and to ask.

In silence the forces are working,
  And we help on the end unawares;
For Nature at Self's root lies lurking,
  And our will is a mask that she wears.
We live, and our life has one meaning
  As men and another as Man:
Each can tell of the one he is gleaning;
  Of the other——who can?

Youth plays, and knows only the pleasure;
  Age thinks, and is fed with the thought;
While Humanity gathers at leisure
  The health and the knowledge thus bought.
And, whatever the age, sex, or nation,
  That thing is a duty or sin
That makes or that breaks the relation
  Of without to within.

We claim her and name her as ours—
  This unknown and unknowable Thing;
This tree, bearing lives for its flowers,
  Whose scent is the worship they bring.
For have we not each the assurance
  That we're more than mere pawns in the game?
This thought ever nerves to endurance,
  And steadies our aim.

The living and lifeless she uses,
Working early and late and always;
Speaks sometimes, but more times refuses,
And grows and develops apace;
And ever a harvest is reaping;
A lesson is learning untaught;
With all lives and all fates in her keeping:
And all to reach——What?

X.—ENTHUSIASM.

THE ceaseless interchange between
The outer and the inner powers,
Make up this life of ours;
That mainly moves along a quiet mean:
When, suddenly, a burning brand,
More potent than magician's wand,
Touches the still, serene,
Cold soul, that quick as light takes fire;
And in the sublimated state
She feels strange strength inspire:
Forgetting self, elate,
Her whole undreamed-of vigor brings
To bear upon the deed to which she with a death-clasp clings!

These troublings of the pool,
Are angels' visits, verily, to most—
The ordinary host—
Now in and for a moment made
Masters of Arts that knew no school;
True poets, singing one song well,
Then, sad to tell,
Leaving the rest unsung, unsaid!

Oh! few there are whose life-stream flows
In a torrent nought can stay;
Using a year's sap in a day,
And flinging blossoms forth as the waves
do spray!

Well were it with Mankind
If those who thus their whole power pour
Were many more!
Enthusiasm takes the foremost place
In helping on the race;
Whether the many-sided mind
That toils with zest
To drag the whole wide world along abreast;
Or the mind with one broadside
Turned full upon one single, certain spot,
Which waxes hot—
All hail to either guide!

XI.—NATURAL ELECTION.

THE world-workshop wide
Presents the perfect scale of skill,
Where Nerve and Muscle, side by side,
Their proper parts fulfill,
Or well or ill:
The Race's duties differing in kind;
While Individuality we find
In special powers of body or of mind.

Behind the mask of Fate lurks Law,
Laying Life's line and limit out;
Unheeding Faith or Doubt;
Watchful lest we should overdraw
The just amount
Of Power—of which she keeps a close and
strict account.

The Poet's grandest theme—
This vast Life-scheme—
  Wrought-out with nervous energy,
Smelted from solar beam;
  Formed, and by function then set free
  Through you, through me.

Oh! for the perfect Man!
Behold the plan:
  First, he must have the warm South's sense,
  That Life in the act may be intense;
And, next, the cold North's thought,
By which Life's armor may be fitly wrought;
  And then the rays of power to run
  From his life-sun
In every way that human effort can:
  Essence of man and men in one—
Behold the perfect man!

Men then were gods, indeed!
  Ah! when will Time bring forth?
  Out of the South or North?
What time or clime will breed?

  Alas! this cannot be!
For jealous Nature knows the cry
  "Divide and conquer!" How can we,
  On molehill Versatility,
Assail the sky?

  With men, as with machines,
Perpetual mental motion means
  The same impossible,
  Perpetual miracle!
The separate springs are moving each
To separate ends within their reach!

XII.—WATCH, THEREFORE.

THE world that gives thee meat and drink.
And space to live thy little span ;
Whose chiefest ornament is man—
As man, the egotist, would think—

This world, thy aged relative,
Who breathed in thee thy first faint breath,
And will withdraw it at thy death—
How likest thou with her to live?

Her ways and thine are far apart,
Like stars are set: her every deed
Flows from a strict, non-human creed;
For lacks she not both head and heart?

Her day and night; her seasons' change;
These daily pulses, yearly beats,
Which she resistlessly repeats,
And will through time's remotest range—

A double rhythm: year and day;
With life like bubbles on the crest
Of waves that reach no shore, and rest—
What prayer the ceaseless sweep can stay?

The moments named thy life by thee,
Have seen the elements combine
For and against this life of thine;
Taking each part indifferently.

They act as only artists can ;
Inspired by very love of art,
Content that self shall praise their part,
Oblivious that thou art, O Man !

Thy healthy hope dies suddenly;
Or with long waiting wastes away,
Until the late, auspicious day
Brings bruised and tasteless fruit to thee.

So, set thyself the means to know
To break or parry Nature's thrust;
And neither chance nor fortune trust,
But master skill to meet the blow.

For knowledge is the only key;
The sesame that flings the gate
Open; and lets thee in the straight
And narrow way to liberty.

Escaping, then, the bondage base
Of ignorance—the state of all,
The very sin original
That rests upon the human race—

Thyself and man and nature know;
Whereby comes courage, strength, and hope;
Fitting thee thus with life to cope:
Watch, therefore; since these things are so.

XIII.—LETTER AND SPIRIT.

When purpose-drunk, what deeds we do,
That duller nerves grow limp before!
An aim makes life a precious ore,
That glowing thoughts go searching through.

The fruit is born of soil and tree;
The river takes the course it must:
In Goodness place implicit trust,
And let each grow, or find the sea.

The many-faced Ideal sends
A quickening, guiding light to each;
By myriad routes the race will reach
That Perfect Life to which it tends.

XIV.—HOROSCOPE.

In the fast deepening blue,
So vast and so far,
On the far-away side of the sky shining through,
He sees the one star;
And the glow on its face
Seems shed of the sun,
Whose glowing glad race
Had an hour ago run:
While the blood-stirring wind as a wrestler laid hold
Of the waters, and over and over they rolled
As restless as thought;
And he stood there and wrought
Of his thought's finest gold,
An instrument strange of such infinite worth,
Resolving the reason for man, and of earth!

With the earth he exists; like the trees
Having life; and with beings draws breath;
But alone is self-conscious, and sees
Some part of the pathway to death.
Space, whose impassable face bends above him;
Time, tongueless but breathless to tell;
And the earth, that is with him and of him—
All under the spell!

As the dove without branch, so the soul without word,
Back to the ark, which is self, has flown;

Flown o'er a wearier waste than the bird,
And sick of the pitiless echo she heard
Mocking her varying tone.

The dim past, the dark future, behind her, before;
The present, a torch carried into the night;
How then shall she journey aright,
From shore unto shore?

Her years of endeavor
Diminish to days;
And her aims are but arrows
Shot devious ways.

XV.—ANNE BROCK.

What can be done or said?
Will Death give up his dead?

O THOU who ever art our own!
O faint and fluttering breath!
From lip and eye and brow forever flown,
That room be made for this dread presence, Death!
Who bids both life and time stand still for thee, this day,
Forever and aye!

Brief, brief is life at best;
But, ah! for thee how brief!
O momentary guest!
Thou hadst partaken not of joy and grief:
While stars still watched thy wakening dawn,
Eternal night came on!

O stricken soul! whose senses all are sealed:
Deaf, dumb, and blind; no beat in heart or brain:
Ere to thyself thou wast thyself revealed,
That light was gone that none can bring again!

Death's dispossessing glance
  Has left thee, oh! so cold and still and white!
Never to know this strange inheritance
  Of hope, love, knowledge, sorrow, and delight!
  Ah! tender plant! on which has fallen the blight;
That, seeing no leaf to seize, nor flower or fruit,
Reached down and stilled the stirrings in the root!
  No perfect shaft to mark a well-won goal;
    No broken column for a half-run race:
  Thy little hands dropped life's unwritten scroll
    Upon a shaftless base!

XVI.—IMMORTAL MAN.

O SOUL of the song of life! immortal Man!
Thy breath is the breath of myriad mortal men,
Who out of darkness (oh, the miracle!)
Leap, soul and body, into light and life!
Immortal Man! sole heir of the innumerable dead,
And of these moving millions heir apparent!
Each life that passes in the grand procession
Is thy profound experiment, wherein
Emotion, passion, intellect combine;
Sex, race, condition—all the environments
Wherewith Fate hedges-in each soul and body.
For all the multitudinous lives of men,
In all their infinite variety,
Are as seed sown ever and ever harvested
To feed thee ever, oh, immortal Man!

XVII.—A BALLAD OF DEATH.

THE furious storm takes wing;
  Quenched is the fiery ray;
And broken the frosty air's sting—
  For these hold mutable sway:

Pain puts an end to its stay;
Ills have a time to endure;
One thing will not heal nor allay:
For death there is no cure!

For the good that the future may bring,
We strive to exist to-day.
With the veering vane we swing,
When fate sweeps fortune away:
Seldom will misery slay;
And ever will hope allure;
Yet one thing endureth for aye:
For death there is no cure!

Though life be an exquisite thing,
Death shatters the curious clay;
Though in frenzy we cry and we cling,
There is none who can save us that day:
So life is devoured as a prey,
And the darkness for aye will immure;
And silence forever hath sway:
For death there is no cure!

Envoi.

O man! be ye sad, be ye gay,
In the end there is one thing sure:
Make out of life what ye may,
For death there is no cure!

XVIII.—LIFE AFTER DEATH.

THE wise man strives, with undivided mind,
To master the moves of the game that all must play,
Or well or ill, till the darkness overtakes:
And when the wise withdraw to sleep for aye,

They leave the eternal fire of thought behind them;
Whereat we may break forth in living flame,
And life's way lighten. Thus are the wise immortal.
The good man yearns, with undivided heart,
To share in the joys and sorrows of the players;
No skilfuller than they, yet frames he rules
Whereby to humanize the heartless game;
No piercing eye that sees a promised land,
But an ear that hears when hunger cries, and a hand
That helps the weary through the wilderness:
And when the good man is forever silent,
The story of his life is eloquent
With fiery words and noble deeds to mould
The coming ages. Thus are the good immortal.
Life after death, wherein to move mankind
To worthy thoughts and deeds. Oh, priceless pearl!
Given to the wise and good to wear for aye!

XIX.—THE END.

THERE is no end of days, no end of nights—
Alternate links of time's unending chain;
There is no end to nature's keen delights,
For spring in time to spring succeeds again:
Yet do they run their ceaseless round in vain!
Will seasons help, will days and nights befriend
When I have reached the end?

There is no end of joys, no end of sorrows—
Alternate links of life's unending chain;
No end of dark to-days and bright to-morrows,
For oft-slain hope as oft will rise again:
Yet let who will rejoice; who will, complain;
What matters the days that mar, the morrows that mend
When I have reached the end?

There is no end of children and their pleasures ;
No end of youthful hearts by visions fed ;
There is no end of men to win life's treasures ;
No end of age to dwell half with the dead :
Though down time's way the great procession tread,
There is none will leave the ranks some help to lend
When I have reached the end.

There is no end of time, no end of space ;
Beneath and above stand stars of all degree ;
This whirling world forever runs its race,
And harvests life thereon perpetually :
What good these everlasting things to me?
Since surely will the shades of death descend,
And then, there is an end !

XX.—NEVER AGAIN.

NEVER again throughout untold to-morrows,
Sleepless and tireless though we watch and wait,
Will they return to taste life's joys and sorrows,
Since caught in the web Death spreads for small and great !
Never to meet forever ! Not one token,
Telling that hearts to distant hearts respond ;
The last look taken and the last word spoken !
The utmost verge reached, they have passed beyond.

The end of life's battle brings peace to the slain,
Who know not the beat of the sun from the rain ;
Grief from joy ; pleasure from pain ;
And are deaf to this life-song's sad refrain—
Never again ! Never again !

SOLILOQUIES.

SOCRATES.*

"Wherever a great soul gives utterance to his thoughts, there also is Golgotha."—*Heine.*

To-day I drink and die! The deadly draught
Was thirty years a-brewing, drop by drop;
And now at last my three accusers come,
Bringing the cup these Senators have filled.
The unbroken column of my life will lose
The last light touches life's last years allow;
Yet I do lay the tools down willingly,
Rather than buy the few remaining years
At the dear price of dishonor: tarnishing,
Not polishing, my life's substantial work.
So, since these Senators, who know the law,
Declare me lawless; sentence me to death;
No magic, craven word of mine will lay
The gaunt, grim spectre, Death, called-up by them.
The law condemns: the law must be fulfilled.
Both vice and crime I fear, but never death!
The wholesome fear of hot, exuberant Youth,
With youth is long outgrown. The noble fear
Of true, courageous Manhood, lest life's work
Be nipped at noon, disturbs not any more,
Since it is eve, and the fear of death is dead.
Year after year here have I brought forth fruit

---

* Socrates, the heroic Greek, having been tried and convicted of blasphemy, was condemned to die by poison.

For all who chose to freely pluck and eat.
Despite the flavor which at first repels,
This fruit of me was liked exceedingly;
Did stimulate and strengthen all who ate,
These many years. But now, some Senators
Discover that these thoughts of mine, which I
Have feigned as fruit, are plainly poisonous;
And for the welfare of the citizens
Demand that I, who bore them, be removed.
The one that ever yearned for sun and shower,
And calmly braved the fiercest elements,
To reach so pitiable an end as this!
A fruitful tree pronounced the worst of weeds!
This sentence kills me as no poison can.
For transplantation is no evil thing:
To-morrow makes me wise as dead men are:
I will awake to walk the market-place
Of a greater Athens; there to spend all time
In questioning the wise men of the past
Concerning Man, the Universe, and God,
And get such answers as will satisfy;
Or else sleep on forever and forever—
The teeming text of Life, or the fly-leaf, Death!
And life elsewhere is life superlative:
Giving the longest time and freest space
To think and act out Man's salvation in.
My life was one continuous debate,
In which ten thousand things were spoken of;
And through mere handling of these paper thoughts,
Great wealth of wisdom was supposed of me.
I made mankind the study of my life;
And give my life, to all eternity,
To them for study. Teaching ever was
My self-appointed, well-beloved task;

Ay! and fit labor for the Highest God,
Since forming mind is worthy work for Him.
The many minds developed under me
Await the final lesson of the course:
And in my willingness to crucify
The love of life, and die, that truth and law,
Which govern me, be both fulfilled thereby,
This last death-lesson leavens all the rest;
And heard to-day, or read of ages hence,
My unsought, unevaded death will send
A thrilling wave, to broaden through the frame,
To flood the brain, and reach the finger-tips!

JOB.

HEALTH and wealth ye hold as wages, which for moral deeds are sent;
So, being sick and poor, ye taunt me, saying, "Lo! thy punishment."
Who hath taken counsel with you? Shown you all the secret springs?
Sent you forth in spotless ermine, judges over hidden things?
None! Ye are but masqueraders; dressed for pleasure, profit, pride!
Through the darkness that perplexes be myself myself's sole guide!

Now let me die! Receive my painful breath;
Cast out this demon, life, with all his band.
Much have I borne and long, yet still I stand
Chained at the brink of the precipice of death:
Now let me die!

Now let me die! Quenched be life's sinking sun!
Rather than day's one hour of hallowed light

Be smirched by an eclipse that blurs the sight,
Let night begin, and sleep and death be one :
Now let me die !

Now let me die ! In birth and death so like :
I came forth naked from my mother's womb ;
Behold me, stripped as naked for the tomb !
The time is full : oh ! bid the angel strike !
Now let me die !

As dust in the whirlwind caught, as the weed in the sea
So the wishes of man are as naught, in the tempest to be !
He sends forth his angel to slay both righteous and scorners ;
Though the scourge sweep thousands away, he laughs at the mourners !
The wicked rule over the tribes, and he lengthens their reign ;
The judges are blinded with bribes, and he shares in the gain !
Who hath the wisdom to reach to the roots of the plan ?
Who hath the boldness to teach a new law for man?
O Being ! who wrought-out alone both evil and good !
O Being ! unseen and unknown, and misunderstood !
Thy enemies, men, that assemble as flies in the sun,
Oh, do not in rage at them tremble ! their race is soon run !
Why stoop from Thy infinite height to one of Thy creatures ?
Why squander Thy infinite might in marring my features ?

Didst Thou make me a man but to hate me? I so
low, Thou so high!
Oh, why didst Thou ever create me!
Why punish me? Why?

Hear me, oh, hear!
Let me be judged at once and openly:
What cause have I for fear?
Though I be slain yet will I question Thee!
How have I erred?
In my defence am I not to be heard?
Release me from this loathsome place!
Bring my accuser here,
That I may meet him face to face!
Am I of flesh and blood not made?
Should not my grief and great calamity be weighed?
Then make my foe appear!
Hear me, oh, hear!

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

MAIDENS of Israel, maidens who mourn with me,
sharing my sorrow,
Ye and the daughter, the sacrifice daughter, will
sever to-morrow;
Never to hear her voice, never to see her face;
parting for aye!
Yet, from Death's sorrowless hours, one moment I
seek not to borrow.
Joy from the midst of my anguish unfolds, like a
lily in May;
Joy at the thought that I bought you the victory
wrought on that day:

I am the price of it; I, the burnt offering vowed for the slaughter.
Life for the man-servant, life for the maid-servant, death for the daughter!

Oh! terrible vow!
Like a stone from a sling,
Piercing her brow!
What balm can we bring?
Oh! terrible vow!

Lo! on our enemies, even the Ammonites, vengeance was poured.
Now is the vow of the father victorious due to the Lord.
Death, the implacable, passionless, pitiless, aims at my heart:
Heart of a warrior, housed in a maiden disdaining the dart.
Sore though the blow may be, bare is my bosom, I dream not to fly;
One thing is crueller even than death is: a virgin to die!
Cedar and cypress trees: almond the blossomer; fig tree and fir;
She is as one of you, rent by the thunderbolt; look upon her,
Dome-like in the dust lying, leaves all but hidden by blossoms new blown:
Than you is she lowlier: wherefore the blossoms? No seed will be grown.
Abased before beasts of the fields, who have firstlings to fondle and rear,
Young has she none with her: soothing, caressing her; holding her dear.

Now let us weep!
With the tiger's creep
Death drew near to us;
With the lightning's leap
He sprang on one dear to us:
Let us weep! Let us weep!

Bitter is death to all, howsoe'er, whensoe'er cometh the draught:
Mine, sweet as honey is, mixed with a poisonous, torturing thought.
Seldom will fall on us Fate's double blow for us—death and disgrace!
The twin blow has stricken me; I, Jephthah's daughter, the last of the race.
Death and disgrace at once! Not only one fig falls, the tree lieth low:
Yea, in so slaying me, slain is the unconceived seed at a blow!
Maidens most sorrowful, Time is still with you, to comfort your lives:
Maidens most fortunate, Time, the magician, will change you to wives.
Oh, to be one of you! First born to latest born, proudly to bear!
Mother-made maidens, when children surround ye, your thoughts let me share.
And, oh! may my martyrdom live in the memory of maidens to be:
Live and be loved, may this maiden immortal; now born unto me.
Fare ye well! Fare ye well! Cruel is dying when Life is in bloom;
With timbrels and dances, again and as gaily, I haste to my doom!

SAMSON.

THOU, whom our fathers adored,
O mightiest Lord!
Thou art God of the gods that be;
All they are as men before Thee:
Thou madest a wall of the waves of the sea,
And Thy chosen passed over dry shod.
Hearken, oh! hearken, Lord God!
To the prayer of Manoah's son—
Of the prophesied one.
Yea, it is I, even I,
In whom Thy strong spirit once hid:
Before me the Philistines fly,
And the lion is rent as a kid—
Yea, it is I!
Lo! look at me, long:
Bound; without strength, without eyes;
I am he who was strong,
Who was strong but not wise.
Oh, why Thy shorn Nazarite spurn?
Lord, let Thy spirit take pity on me, and return!

O Thou of the earth-shaking rod,
Jehovah the God!
Name whereat Baal is afraid!
Who in strength is before Thee? None!
Thy will is a sceptre, Thy word is a sword;
Thou commanded'st the moon and the sun;
And the sun stood still, and the moon was stayed!
Oh, hear me and help me, Lord!
I am he whom the barren bare;
I was he of the uncut hair.
Oh! was not Thy spirit in my spirit poured;
Moving me mightily, Lord,

Once an uncircumcised thousand to slay
With a bone, the jawbone of an ass.
But alas, and alas!
The smiter is smitten, and snared as a prey,
And loaded with fetters of brass!
Oh! to be once more strong!
Unto Thee, unto Thee, Lord God, I belong;
Then why Thy shorn Nazarite spurn?
Lord, let Thy spirit take pity on me, and return!

In Thee is the world's strength stored,
Master and Lord!
All we are but bubbles that down to death ride!
In the end we are sealed with the sod!
But thou, though the heavens fall, Thou wilt abide,
All-giving eternal God!
Hear me and help me, Lord God of the strong;
I am he whom Thy angel foretold;
Unto Thee, as a Nazarite bred,
Thine have I been my life long,
Yet I strove not the great gift to hold,
The gift of Thy spirit that fled,
With the locks of my head!
Help me, O Lord!
I burst the green withs, I snapped the new cord;
I it was, bore away Gaza's great gate;
And I toyed with the monstrous weight,
As I climbed to the top of the hill.
There was none in the whole land's length
Could enslave me or kill.
Now am I shorn of my strength;
Helpless and sightless and weak!
Send me, oh! send me the strength that I seek!

Oh ! why Thy shorn Nazarite spurn ?
Lord, let Thy spirit take pity on me, and return !

Hark ! It is she—it is she !
Demon, disguised as a dove !
Tempter, who lured me with love !
Love, claiming my secret for fee !
Hath thy musical voice but one key ?
I am hearing the same tender tone
Which I foolishly fancied my own :
How merry her comrades and she !
They have won and are glad, having cast Thee out ;
Stolen my strength, stolen my sight ;
I am wroth at the victor's shout :
And the sound of the praise of the strange god's might,
Who delivered me into their hands, they say.
Deliver me out of their hands, O Lord !
Show Thyself stronger than Dagon and they ;
Send strength as a sword !
Once a dry bone Thou didst clave,
And water gushed forth Thy servant to save.
Hearken again to his voice ;
Let the heathen no longer rejoice.
Enter in with Thy servant to dwell ;
Then shall we have sport this day :
I will pull down these pillars in play,
And the house will be crushed as a shell ;
And Thy name above all be adored—
Enter, O Lord !
Why, why Thy shorn Nazarite spurn ?
Lord, let Thy spirit, beholding my anguish, return !

Strength, as a wave, draweth near—
Spirit of the Lord, Thou art here—Thou art here !

BACON.

(*With Shakespeare's Plays, in Manuscript, before him.*)

"He dies, and makes no sign."—*Shakespeare.*

THE office pays him well—this mask of mine.
No greater gift man ever made to man :
A world-wide fame, for nothing, save the loan
Of the letters used to form his empty name !
The wealth of reputation known as mine
Suffices me. The fortune hoarded here,
In this man's name, most surely will revert
Unto the earner—me ; though when the news
Of the restitution will arrive, and where
'Twill find me then, I can but wonder now.
And yet, on pondering on what I know
Of the workings of man's mind, the mist moves-off
The future somewhat ; showing forth the path
That progress takes : a narrow, spiral path ;
That, slowly rising, surely will at last
Lead to the mountain-top, where free, fresh air
Abounds ; while not a church-spire, even, stops
Man's searching gaze that sweeps the horizon.
The lesson taught persistently to man,
And by him learned laboriously, is this :
Power is born of power alone ; came not
From nothing, nor in nothing can it end ;
That omnipresent Justice stands
With scales aloft, and weighs out work
With weights of nerves and muscles, weight for
weight.
Beneath the powerful lens of knowledge, then,
These plays of mine being placed, the inward eye,

Now achromatic made, will see in them,
Thus magnified, what never naked eye
Has seen—strange sights, undreamed-of things:
The circulation of the silent sap
That underlies the life of every leaf.
And as the river running past our door,
That serves our uses, yet unquestioned flows,
Is one day traced up to its hidden source;
So these, my plays, the fruit of half my life,
Will serve their end—instruction, pleasure, give—
While thought of vaguely as a manna-fall,
Or vigorous Nature's strange, spontaneous growth;
Until the breadth and depth of the volume's stream
Will one day set them seeking out its source.
This work of mine—my love-child, he has made
Legitimate, oh! easy, lucky man!—
"Displays so well the strategetic skill
Of a mind commanding hosts of others' thoughts.
Wearing her fine, well-fitting uniform,
And officered and drilled by native thoughts."
Now, having of my spirit's spirits drank,
The warmed blood yearns unto me lovingly;
The sharpened senses see beneath the bowl
"The deep experience needed to distill
Such draughts as well might tempt the gods to drink."
As curious as village gossips grown,
They pry into the privatest affairs
Of their "great teacher—he whose wondrous words
Are commonplaces truly, but whose life
None know of, though Imagination fills
A bulky book with half-a-score of words!
See special fitness here, and there, and there,
And high skill everywhere; so, therefore, he

Possessed—no ! no ! must have possessed—
Transcendent powers to do these mighty deeds."
This is the *à posteriori* way
In which they 'll walk until they run against
My half-tenth rate, mild man : whom heated air,
Or blood, had made a monstrous giant of.
Incredulous, they 'll cry : "Oh, no ! not him !
Why, twenty such would be too few for this !
For is the age of miracles not past ?"
And then the truth will out. But stay ! suppose
This deep deduction false ; some circumstance
Unknown, say, or omitted, marring it ;
And so my secret shall sleep-on with me !
What then ? Well, if so, even so it is ;
And tempts me not to trust to any breast
Surprising news to stun my mourners with.
For, after all, my loss is lightened much,
Remembering everything : the exquisite
Enjoyment gods and mothers feel ;
For Fame fills not the netted veins so full
Of blood so hot as new-born fiery thoughts.
The very sight of these I travailed for
Diffuses joy ! How fast the colors stand
There in the dress that Nature wore for me !
Behold the look that human nature had
When vivisected ! stamped indelibly
For future eyes to see and recognize !
I coin experience into precepts pure
And ever current, and give to moralists
Their aptest texts to sermonize upon.
Now, if the world will use his name for mine,
And find his face familiar as a friend's,
My soul rests satisfied ; and turning to
The secret glass of Self for audience,

Recites her finished work ; and feels anew
The glow of inspiration ; hears with pride
The just applause of Self for deeds well done ;
Making her heedless of the world without :
So, be the homage given to whom it will,
The godlike sense of power dwells with me still !

TO MY WIFE.

JUNE DAYS.

I.

THERE'S something most mysterious in air and earth and sky,
At this season when the year is at its noon :
A thrilling touch is on the soul that steals through ear and eye ;
And we live the dear past o'er again in the living month of June !

The glad green of the grass ; the fresh breath of the air ;
The birds that come a-singing the old tune ;
The full life that Nature nurtures with an omni-present care—
Are the sweet familiar tokens of the mid-day month of June !

The rustling of memory delicious music makes,
As it wanders through the sunny days of June ;
Of the blessed, chosen June, whose warm welcome presence wakes
In our hearts the recollection when they first were set attune.

And when the end of life is reached, be it far or be it near,
Looking back along the way with roses strewn,

This life lived-out in sight of thee, in the distance
doubly dear,
Will seem in very truth, my love, a long, sweet day
of June!

II.

Deep in the heart of the one great mother of all,
Lies last year's myriad life, beyond recall:
Glad birds, gay flowers; the butterfly, the bee;
And populous cities of the grass and tree.
But see! the sun has pierced her with his dart,
And her immortal prisoners, quick and free,
Leap from her heart!

Deep in the heart that loves for once and aye,
Lies one year's June, forever passed away:
Glad souls, gay hours, bright hopes, and fancies fair;
Yearnings and dreams, and love-confessions there.
June breathes on June, and see the quickening start!
The 'wakened host of deathless memories rare,
Leap from the heart!

III.

Fresh with fickle showers; warm through night to
noon;
Gay with gladsome flowers, comes the queenly June—
Like the full-orbed moon.

As a maiden blushes (joy and love confessed),
Flushes, pales, and flushes, like the stricken West—
So our royal guest.

Roses in her hair, on her breast a rose,
Perfume all the air; pluck we one of those!
What will it disclose?

As a swift bird settles, thought-winged memory dwells
On this mound of petals; while each petal tells
Stories, like sea-shells.

How, with earth-king's dower, with the sun-god's boon,
Grew the flesh-like flower, grew the rose in June—
Rose and Love in tune!

On a golden day, which the petals chose
In some secret way, all their charms unclose—
Love learns of the rose!

Leaf from rose-leaf severs; day descends from noon,
Spite of all endeavors; yet, with hearts attune,
Love forgets not June!

IV.

From flowers unto flowers; from snows unto snows,
The stream of the hours for evermore flows;
And we on its bosom sweep onward together, as onward it goes!

The earth's bright adorning; the midnight's deep swoon;
The day's merry morning; the hush of the noon;
And the newly-blown emblem upborne by the rose bush, proclaim it is June!

March for the sowing; for April the start;
All May for the growing—Nature's fine art!
Lo! June's sun at noon now is filling the cup of the flower of the heart!

The month of the roses departs, ah! so soon!
For sad, sad the close is when sweet is the tune;
But since that dear hour of the bloom of love's flower
it has always been June!

When empty Time's quiver; when ended Love's glee;
Life's turbulent river at rest in the sea:
Shall we then know November from June, and remember, wheresoever we be?

TO FANNIE.

THE wealth of health is hers—equipment strong!
The rest that gives the lever, will, its way;
Her mobile features fleetest thoughts obey;
Her sparkling spirits to that health belong.
Her soul grows restless at the thought of wrong;
The right she follows, lead it where it may;
Emotions quick and fine her being sway—
And 'twas her light and heat brought forth my song.

And now she shines for me alone—for me!
In sweet companionship we live this life,
And aim to make our lives all they should be;
The only striving is to keep from strife.
'Tis she that breeds and sets sweet fancies free—
I draw my inspiration from my wife!

ONE YEAR AFTER.

TIME falls in day-drops that forever break
Upon the soul with separate strokes, as slight
And soft as a snowflake!
Yet in their ceaselessness there lurks a might;
And feasts and fasts and times we keep
To chew the cud of memory·

And read the legend, cut so slow, so deep !
The Past, that was asleep,
  We waken and converse with pleasantly !

Of all the days held in remembrance
From duty, choice, or chance ;
  This day—whose dawn I run to meet
  On glad, fleet feet ;
  And with the warmest welcome greet—
Is worth a year of other days,
  This marriage-day of mine !
Oh ! that I knew a hundred ways
Of carving, painting, singing praise,
  To dedicate this dawning day divine !

The crisp autumnal leaves,
The warm snow-blanket Winter weaves,
  Spring's quickening sun and shower,
  And Summer's freight of fruit and flower,
  Came jostling in between me and the hour
She gave herself to me and I to her :
And now midsummer comes as messenger
  Of the dear day's return !
A season-link of the year-long chain,
Passing me now again ;
  Causing my brain to burn,
  To think that she is mine, for whom my whole hot
      heart did yearn !

My loved and loving wife !
  How fast the phrase flies after thought,
  To bind it fast in words unsought !
Oh ! thou rare graft upon my tree of life !
  The service for this holy holiday

Has long lain written by love's artless art
Upon the altar of the heart;
And now seeks utterance as a wedding lay!

Oh! noble type of woman! far excelling
In all the qualities that sex secretes;
Here with me ever dwelling,
My life and joy completes!
With quick, strong sympathies, impelling
To deeds deemed rash by the colder, smaller soul,
Whose heart needs no control!
Her being's surface, great and sensitive,
By the wind from every source is sown;
And when the seed they give
Ripens, the sower long has flown!
The gift of tact with her has second nature grown—
That supreme art that needs
Minutest mental touch and sight;
Where skill succeeds in spite of might,
And safely through the labyrinth leads!
As a woman, first, she forced me to admire
An active mind; a true and tender heart;
Then turned a gentle warmth into a fire,
When as a wife she plays her rarest part!
Unbounded love she brings to me,
And absolute fidelity
To loftiest sense of what a wife should be!
Versed in innumerable ways
That Love concocts in his heart-lair,
To take me prisoner hair by hair!
Oh! worthy mate of mine!
Companion! Helper in life's every phase!
In whom so many powers combine!

With my whole being in full sympathy !
So quick to seize ! Suggests so happily !
With all the sparkle of the finest wine !

Oh ! may each coming year this year repeat !
This finished first year spent with thee, my sweet !
Whereof each day dawned brighter than the last,
Waking to dwell with sense of happiness ;
Now doubly dear since memories of the past !
Oh ! may the living Love our lives express
Grow never less !

Yea ! But the future years shall surely see
Our faith fulfilled, our hope reality !
What deeper-rooted rock than this first year ?
Wherein each learned to know the other well—
So well that knowledge leaves no room for fear !
Our hearts will quiver with the marriage-bell
Even at Death's knell !

A HUSBAND'S VALENTINE.

Of the week's seven sacred days,
One only is holy ;
Of the year filled full of love's praise,
One day is love's solely.

No new song to greet love's day,
I sing for thee, sweet ;
But varied the hundredth way,
The old one repeat.

For yesterday's thoughts are here,
And to-morrow's speech ;
Days past and to come drawn near
That love may reach.

Oh, Love ! an eternal Now,
As a god's life is ;
Oh ! blinder than Fate art thou,
Yet thy way never miss !

On the highway of life love's light
Made bright my sky ;
And love looking down from the height,
Said softly, "'Tis I !"

My love on Love's birthday read
That great god's praise,
From one who will live-out his creed
To the end of his days.

A convert whose whole hot heart
With the cause keeps time ;
Whose zeal is too real to depart
In the present rhyme !

ONE TO THE OTHER.

My darling ! my own !
Thou art mine ! mine alone !
Love's spirit enfolds thee,
And the heart of love holds thee !

Mine ! mine thou art !
Not in little nor much—
From the beat of thy heart
To thy finger touch !
All the rays that illume ;
All the thoughts that bloom.

Thou art mine ! all mine !
Undivided and whole !

Other faces and forms are but art-work fine,
That ripples the fancy, but stirs not the soul!
Since at the soul's summit stands Love as a sun;
And before nor beside nor near him there's none.

YOU AND I.

"If you love me as I love you:"
The mute, imprisoned thought shone through
His eyes, that never her face forsook;
But followed and watched with a longing look.
Love's masterpiece for him was wrought,
Since she he found was the one he sought:
With her in his sky to flood the day,
Then, oh, for spring in the heart alway!

"If you love me as I love you:"
From her heart the thought escaping flew
Up to the heaven of a happy face:
A song without words and a nameless grace.
For Love had seized his brush anew,
And his masterpiece for her he drew;
And she felt that life-long joy was near,
Since he she had chosen was here—was here!

"If you love me as I love you:"
She needs not sigh nor need he sue,
Since side by side they watch without fear
The life-laden slave of Old Time—the Year.
And they say, "He may carry off little or much,
There is one dear thing that he dares not touch,
Of the past, of the present, and future, too—
'Tis: 'You love me as I love you!'"

YOUR LOVE AND MINE.

YOUR full-orbed soul is flooding me with love:
How sweet to feel the heat and light thereof!
How dear to know, the rays converging ever
Doth magnify me with a power divine;
Making high deeds of every slight endeavor:
While closer clings than ever tree and vine,
Your love and mine.

And in the night of absence, brief though it be,
'Tis this inspiring thought has hold of me:
Soon will the dawn of my return be breaking,
And the clear sun of thy bright presence shine;
The meeting sweetening the sad leave-taking:
For time dims not, nor space, though both combine,
Your love and mine.

And looking at myself, as in a glass,
Perplexed how my good fortune came to pass,
I feel as one of royal blood, who ponders
Upon the part the fates to him assign;
As o'er his kingdom he in fancy wanders:
Like him and his, so joined without design,
Your love and mine.

What can I give for this great gift of yours?
Nothing, save love of you while life endures.
Yet though the heart and voice sustain each other,
Singing with you this symphony so fine,
Your clear strong tones my weaker strains do smother:
There is no song excels at love's sweet shrine,
Your love and mine.

THIS ROBBER YEAR.

THIS robber Year has with his bandit Day
Conspired to piecemeal steal so much away:
The pearls of Winter; silver from the Spring;
The Summer's gold; the Autumn's robe and ring;
Sweet hours we could not keep, nor can recall;
And scores of sunsets, masterpieces all!
The moon-made days we strangely misname nights—
These, and a thousand other dear delights,
Proved precious plunder for this robber Year;
Whose greed would heed not neither love nor fear!

And yet this robber blindly passes by
The room wherein our richest treasures lie:
Not seeing Love, the sentry at the door;
Nor dreaming of the gathered, guarded store
Of golden memories, ours until the day
Death bears-off life, and with it all, for aye!

So, since I still can ring your birthday bell,
And you can yet so promptly pay, and well:
Let's laugh at Time's old captain, passing here—
This robber Year!

HE AND SHE.

Two forces out of Nature's wondrous store,
Whose power combined should on one focus pour.

The one is stern and self-contained and bold,
And, strength-proud, has a comet-like desire
To slip the hold of our great central fire,
Nor fears to dwell out in the utter cold.
The other, humble, hesitating, meek,

And hungry, fears to wander from the source
Of light and heat, but keeps the accustomed course
With utmost care ; nor strange suns will she seek.
The one, by logic led, ascends with toil ;
The other intuition trusts, with ease
Descends. The first in brightest light would freeze ;
The second craves for heat—a fire, not oil.
And while *he* gathers thought from this life-soil,
She stores emotion up—both busy bees.

What will join this Brain and Heart?
Direction to this Force impart?

'Tis essence, form disguised, by essence sought ;
Each drawn by mystic sympathy's strong pull.
Each feels a want : she, lacking strength ; he, rule :
His good is good ; her good, a duty taught—
The same result by unlike process wrought :
Their added harvests fill the measure full.

And thus the scales that think and feel
Are brought to balance in the real-ideal.

LABORES.

Ye worshipers bending before her,
O'erladen with gifts for her shrine,
Ye do well to admire and adore her,
She is great above all and divine!
Surpassing the Greek-conceived stories:
With hands and with garments that soil:
O humble and haughty Labores,
Our Goddess of Toil!

'Tis mine to bedeck thee with praises,
My well-paying labor of love;
I coin for thee current gilt phrases,
That set thee beyond and above:
My voice is both husky and broken;
My weight has been greatly increased;
I am paid for each syllable spoken,
I, Proudflesh, the priest!

O strenuous souls in strong bodies!
How ye struggle and strain and perspire!
From the height of the throne where a god is,
I will reach down the sponge when ye tire!
I have set apart one day in seven,
That rest may replenish the oil;
Dividing your days between Heaven
And our Goddess of Toil.

No trifling mere tithes are ye leaving,
Like a ravenous churchman demands ;
For I, the high-priest, am receiving
Nine-tenths of the work of your hands !
Though the dust and the grime that inclose you
Be as bars in the cage of a beast,
There is one looking through them who knows you,
I, Proudflesh, the priest !

As I jingle your gifts, as I jingle,
I cry to you never to shirk !
Since dirt and true dignity mingle !
Since nothing is nobler than work !
See the workmen in halos of glories,
Forgetting the duties that moil,
At sight of thee, holy Labores,
Our Goddess of Toil !

What though there be many mouths mocking :
The gifted, the wealthy, the proud ;
Though they sneer, though they whisper things shocking,
Of the "masses," the "mob," and the "crowd ;"
Though they treat you with scorn and despise you,
As they shake you the crumbs from their feast,
There is one who reviles not nor "guys" you,
I, Proudflesh, the priest !

O assiduous, sedulous toilers !
So active, so nimble, so spry !
Ye shame all the laggards and spoilers
Who would reap without sowing the rye !
O ye are the salt with a savor !
O ye are manure to the soil !
Ye are taken this day into favor
By our Goddess of Toil.

She sends unto all of you, greeting,
And manifold blessings this day;
The pleasures of life they are fleeting,
Then think but of work and not play!
For work wears a visage of beauty;
From her service who would be released?
Have not I an adorable duty,
I, Proudflesh, the priest?

What! What! Thou her message refusest?
(Some souls there are yet who blaspheme!)
The work which thou lackest thou losest,
If thou callest devotion a scheme!
Would a priest (and a high-priest) tell stories?
And truth's spotless robe would he soil,
For the good of the cause of Labores,
Our Goddess of Toil?

O Goddess, again we implore thee!
Inspire us once more with thy wine!
Bring back the long hours to adore thee
With worship from five until nine!
Else into thought's gulf we be falling,
Or be puffed-up with college-brewed yeast:
In the name of thy sons am I calling,
I, Proudflesh, the priest!

Oh! teach us to labor untiring;
To thrive on a sup and a bite;
To hire out our souls in our hiring;
To fulfil each industrial rite:
Oh! kill every thought that emerges;
Exhaust us and freeze us and broil;
Overwhelm with innumerable surges,
O Goddess of Toil!

Thou shalt set upon all but the laggard,
The seal that proclaims them as thine:
Thou shalt pinch up the face and make haggard;
Thou shalt bend down the back for a sign;
Thou shalt loosen their joints; thou shalt scar them;
Thou shalt treat them as one with the beast:
Even I, thy vicegerent, must mar them,
I, Proudflesh, the priest!

Have I labored enough, O Labores?
Have I praised thee my dutiful time?
Thy beauty and worth such a store is,
'T would wear-out all rhythm and rhyme.
Have I fired men with glimpses of beauty?
Have I fed men with honey and oil?
Have I done my adorable duty,
O Goddess of Toil?

By the little ones weakly and stunted,
Who are needed to play their small part;
By the half-grown, with senses half blunted,
Who know thee so well what thou art;
By the father made brutish by labor;
By the mother whose love has long ceased;
By the love that I bear for my neighbor,
I, Proudflesh, the priest!

By the body which once was a dwelling,
Where the soul finds a prison instead;
By the slaves we are buying and selling,
That are ours till the day they are dead;
By the mountain of gifts that they bring thee;
By the wage of six feet of the soil—
Receive and believe what I sing thee,
O Goddess of Toil!

And ye, with lives barren of pleasure,
  Though your hopes are killed one after one;
Though the march for the dead be the measure
  Until life's wretched journey be done;
Though the curse of life bitter and sore is,
  The malice of fate ye may foil,
If ye fall down and worship Labores,
  Our Goddess of Toil!

THE WIFE'S CHOICE.

In a far-off famous land, in days long gone,
Before the wise, good Rabbi Simeon
A childless couple sorrowfully came;
And, neither on the other casting blame,
Begged that the rabbi grant them a decree
Divorcing them forthwith, perpetually:
Since seven unfruitful years had come and fled,
And found a childless home, a barren bed.

The keen-eyed rabbi read in each pale face
The wish to save the other from disgrace;
Then bowed his head, and said in accents mild:
"Sad is the house wherein no voice of child
Makes glad the twofold heart with pride and joy;
Yet, that malicious tongues may not annoy
With whispered evil motive, secret sin,
Before your separate, single lives begin,
Invite your friends, from greatest to the least,
And be your supper as a marriage feast,
To show you part as friends and part in sorrow;
Then I will grant your wish upon the morrow."

Well pleased, they take his counsel, and prepare
A parting feast, and call their friends to share.
Then spake the husband to his childless wife,
"We part not now in anger, hate, or strife;
And, as a pledge that this is really so,
Take what you like best with you when you go."
She smiled, and promised him a choice to make,
And ever treasure it for old-times' sake.

The guests were gone, save only six at most
By the good cheer vanquished, when at last the host
Himself succumbed. The wily wife then bade
That he be to her father's house conveyed.
The morning came, and, from his stupor free,
He woke, and gazed about him wonderingly.
Then said his wife, who stooped and touched his breast,
"Of all your household have I chosen the best;
Till death divorces never shall we part!"
And, rising up, he pressed her to his heart.

THE TRUE FAITH.

The cold stone floor on which she kneels
Feels soft unto this worshiper;
Whose face a fervent soul reveals,
As lips are saying silent prayer:
The time and place have hold of her;
And holy seems the very air.

The dizzy dome made heaven by art,
Where angels watch the multitude;
The saints whose trials touch the heart;

The solemn service of the priest—
  This is her spirit's daily food;
Her humble spirit deems a feast.

The organ's sound that fills the ears,
  Has found where deep emotions breed;
And, joined to holy words, for years,
Is ever echo of the voice
  That chants the long familiar creed;
That came with birth, and stays from choice.

The flood of music, as of light,
  Creating color as it flows,
The mystic music-rays, once white,
The ears' rare, prismic portals pass;
  And glorify life's plainest prose:
While onward moves the blessed mass.

Sonorous souls attuned and fit
  For true communion, each with all;
Whose creed the music-masters writ;
Now voiced in organ-speech as strong
  As councils ecumenical:
Here hold one common faith in song.

A common faith for all mankind!
  Oh, needed faith! Oh, future faith!
That it hath entered in man's mind,
To half conceive: oh, haste, great birth!
  One word of it the organ saith:
This coming creed of all the earth.

To have that truest charity,
  Unto thy fellow-man, that springs
From knowledge-born, keen sympathy:

The newer, purer golden rule,
That says, "Let others do;" from kings
To serfs, from wise man unto fool.

To look with spirit catholic
Upon mankind's wide energies;
With sharp, sure sight, both keen and quick,
To see and worship worth; and deem
All lives as flowers for human bees,
Springing to greet the same sunbeam!

When man one language speaks at last,
And all strange faiths drawn near are known,
This one true faith will bind as fast
As these by theirs united here:
This one true faith, and this alone,
Sufficient for the thousandth year!

CUI BONO?

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" the little boy said,
While wrinkles ran over his brow,
"This washing my face and combing my head—
What good is it, anyhow?"

"Oh, dear! dear me!" the mother said,
While a new crease crossed her brow,
"It's clean and cook and eat and to bed—
What good is it, anyhow?"

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" the father said,
While trying to smooth his brow,
"It's earn and spend, world without end—
What good is it, anyhow?"

"Ah, me! ah, me!" the lady sighed,
While she ruffled her pallid brow,
"It's nothing but dress and envy and pride—
What good is it, anyhow?"

"Alas! alas!" the old man cried,
While the furrows ploughed deeper his brow,
"From the struggle for breath to the struggle with death,
What good is it, anyhow?"

THANKSGIVING DAY.

THANKS!
That all is so well with us here;
For the greater barn builded this year;
For the broader lands purchased this day;
For the larger house, brownstone and gray,
With oriel windows and bay;
For success in our bold speculation;
For our proper and lofty station;
For the comfort and ease that it brings;
For a thousand and one pleasant things;
For the large dividend of November;
For the items we fail to remember;
For stocks, bonds, and cash in two banks—
Thanks!

Thanks!
That things are no worse with us here;
For dear food that might be more dear;
For the two rooms that might have been one;
For the half-loaf that might have been none;

For thin clothing and little—what matters!
They might be still less and in tatters;
For work at no-matter-what wage;
For mere life in this pot-metal age;
For the point of our nose above water;
For slow death instead of swift slaughter;
For ten thousand and ten evil things
That somewhere are pruning their wings,
Giving respite, at least, this November;
For the sweet motes we fail to remember;
For the pasteboard cut into life's blanks—
Thanks!

CHRISTMAS DAY.

O Princes! Christian but in name,
Why do ye keep this day?
While yet mankind is but as game
To capture or to slay!
Leave musket, sword, and monster gun;
Bid fife and drum to cease;
And let His will, not yours, be done—
Then talk to us of Peace!

O People! Christian but in name,
Why do ye keep this day?
Ye rob the blind, the halt, the lame,
And on each other prey!
Sell all ye have and follow Him,
Your Christian vows fulfil;
And make it not a mockery grim
To tell us of Good Will!

O Churches of the Christian name!
  Hold steadfast to the end!
Bear up beneath your cross of shame;
  The world is slow to mend.
Peace and Good Will are on the way;
  Man's faith will be retrieved;
Sing not that Christ is born to-day,
  But that He is conceived!

NEW YEAR ADVICE.

YOUTH, so merry, free from care
  (Not yet captured);
With life's never-ending fair
  Still enraptured:
Sixty pages more to fill
Ere will come life's cureless ill,
Ere the ceaseless beat be still—
    Quick! . . . turn over!

Man, whom two great powers inspire
  (Slave or servant):
Stern-browed Duty and Desire,
  Fierce and fervent!
Often where their paths have crossed
Duty in the ditch was tossed—
Failures are success's cost,
    So . . . turn over!

Maiden, trembling with delight
  (Ring on finger),
Sweet thoughts paint thee pink and white
  While they linger:

Glad thou art to earn love's wage,
Proud to dwell within love's cage,
Loth to leave this red-lined page—
Yet . . . turn over!

Luckless one, the butt of Fate
(Deaf, blind Master);
Month by month there stood in wait
Dire Disaster!
Time is left to slip the curse,
Swell thy veins and fill thy purse;
Nursing woes will make them worse—
Come! . . . turn over!

Mortal, going off the stage
(ENTER—EXIT):
Fourscore days, months, years, the age—
Fate directs it!
Since by hand of next best friend,
Now is written down—THE END,
Another blank-book Fate may send—
Then . . . turn over!

JUST ONE!

WITH outstretched hand and longing eyes,
By so many pretty things surrounded,
"Just one! just one!" the little maid cries,
With eagerness unbounded:
Fate heeds her not; but passes by,
Even though little maids beg and cry!

By silver trees full of apples of gold,
The proud youth stood surrounded;
"Just one! just one to have and hold,"
He cried, with hope unbounded:

But Fate, with time and chance, hurries by ;
And the golden fruit still hangs on high !

The poor man, toiling day and night,
By poverty's wall surrounded,
For just one chance to scale the height
His pitiful cry resounded :
But deaf and blind and heartless all,
Fate built up higher still the wall !

So many a starved, ill-treated life,
By misery and vice surrounded ;
While for just one child this heart-sick wife
Would give her wealth unbounded :
But the angel sent that night from heaven,
Made her neighbor's six poor wretches, seven !

Yet Fate is fond of the number One :
With one blessing weighs one curse ;
And behold ! one body, one soul, one sun,
One God, one universe !
And three great things Fate ever gave,
One after one : life, death, and a grave !

FLOOD TIDE.

YEA : fervor and force youth yielding him, wrought
with him
Hotly and hard at Fate's task, day and night,
And the high hope that spurred, and the soul-stirring
thought with him,

Nerving to close with the foes who there fought with
him,
Quickened by rays that reached down from the
height,
Were as hosts in the fight!

Nay: never could courage inspiring him, slay with
him
Numbers unnumbered that grew as the grass,
So the certain eclipse came and made the day gray
with him:
Fate gave the wolves and the vultures their way with
him;
Till the mist of the breath of his purpose, alas!
Could dim not the glass!

Then forth into exile his stripped spirit goes with
him;
Burdened by thoughts of the present and past;
When lo! on a morrow, a new sun arose with
him;
In a land overflowing, whose wealth ever grows with
him:
For the wondrous one turn of the tide and the
blast,
Drove landward at last—
Eldorado at last!

HER HEART'S DESIRE.

O CRUEL Fate, and kind!
To fill her empty hands with gold,
Only to find
There is one thing never sold;

One thing she cannot buy or hire—
Her heart's desire!

O Fate, so cruel and kind!
Unto fame's upper seat to raise her,
Only to find
She kindles not, though all the people praise her;
Her restless eyes are seeking something higher—
Her heart's desire!

O cruel Fate, and kind!
On her to lavish all things, saving one,
Only to find
The same sad, longing look when all is done.
O Fate, so kind! why, why so cruel?
Take up the pearls all trodden in the mire,
And bring her only that one priceless jewel,
Whose glorious ray will waken and inspire—
Her heart's desire!

NEXT!

See how eagerly we scan the papers for the news, sir;
Murders, scandals, accidents, in numbers to confuse, sir:
Is that great sensation's fever-heat now growing cold, sir?
Then, the latest wonder must be surely nine day old, sir.
Next, sir! Next, sir! That's the people's text, sir;
When they've drained one subject dry they're ready for the next, sir!

See her sweet, bewitching air, so lately very sad, sir;
Having duly mourned she now may be a little glad, sir.
Well she knows the joys and woes that go with wedded life, sir;
And she thinks it proper form again to be a wife, sir.
Next, sir! Next, sir! That's the widow's text, sir;
Since she has disposed of one she's ready for the next, sir!

See how mournfully he looks, how sadly shakes his head, sir;
As he dwells upon the days that have forever fled, sir.
Hopes and fears have vanished quite, the vital fire burns low, sir;
Life's play ends, the curtain falls, he must prepare to go, sir.
Next, sir! Next, sir! That's the old man's text, sir;
Since this life is leaving him he's looking for the next, sir!

See the miles on miles of men, all waiting to hurrah, sir!
Such a soul-inspiring sight what mortal ever saw, sir?
Yet his predecessor rode between these very men, sir;
So will his successor ride that very route again, sir!
Next, sir! Next, sir! That's the masses' text, sir;
Since they have disposed of one they're ready for the next, sir!

See the tiny, toddling child, who vainly tries to lisp, sir;
Soon will those small feet begin to chase life's will-o'-the-wisp, sir:
Hopes will ripen one by one, and lure him on and on, sir;
Never stopping once to rest until the last is gone, sir.
Next, sir! Next, sir! That 's the golden text, sir;
'T is not what we had or have, but what we will have next, sir!

CENTENNIAL, 1876.

THE GREETING.

THE year, and the day,
Before us now stand,
And the fair maiden, May,
With spring flowers in her hand.

O Union of States! thou owest
All to the workmen who wrought thee;
O Union of States! thou knowest
What tears and what trials have taught thee;
O Union of States! thou goest
Still in the way which they brought thee,
And the hopes and the fears
Of thy hundred of years
Are shared by the millions who sought thee.

The flags are unfurled,
And the gates give way
To the hosts of the world,
On this morning in May!

May 10, 1876.

THE FAREWELL.

WHAT is to be,
In time we see ;
Then it becomes a memory.

Day follows day,
Time will not stay ;
Great things and small all pass away.

The meeting all gladness,
That green day of May ;
The parting all sadness,
This gray autumn day.

O Nations ! we thank you for blending
Here in our chorus your voice ;
O Nations ! we praise you for sending
Out of your choicest the choice !
O Nations ! what gift shall it be,
To remember the day we rejoice ?
One wish take ye thence :
A hundred years hence
A Union of Nations be ye !

The flags are unfurled,
And Liberty's bell
Rings out to the world
Farewell and farewell !

November 10, 1876.

THE EXPRESS PASSES.

WHAT seeks this devotee ?
The unworshiped sun has set ;
Though unappeased, the angry winds scarce fret ;
The unawing thunder, far off, mutters now :

Is it wonder or fear,
Or a votary's vow,
That holds him here,
When the day and the night have met?
What flashes in sight,
Than Mars more bright,
There, where the four rails run into one,
Straight as the threads by a spider spun,
Or the flight of a bird or bee?
That sudden reddish ray,
Three thousand yards away:
As it strikes how it stirs this devotee;
As though through each separate wire
Of the network overhead,
Fulfilling his heart's desire,
"Prepare, for I come!" was said.

"Oh, power! that stamps the god and the hero—
power.
Another minute and that mighty mass,
That seeming living thing by man created;
With its hundreds of tons and its freight of human
lives,
Will pass me like a ball from a cannon's mouth!
In Nature's mighty actions man is the moth,
Seeing the sight sublime, and perishing!
For who can stand beside the avalanche?
Who brave the hurricane? live through the lava
storm?
O'erlook the whirlpool? touch the waterspout?
Or watch the earthquake-wave sweep over the
city?
Yet, see! Man's monster, the sublime of art,
At arm's length leaps like lightning by me!

I am thrilled as though Death's breath had chilled
me—
And the thunderbolt of Man has passed !"

DAISIES.

Oh, miniature flowers of the sun !
Growing like grain in the meadow, here ;
A thousand thousand-and-one !
Armed with gold shield and white spear—
Bright battle array—
Ready the south wind's will to obey,
At this holiday time of the year—
Yea, of the week, of the day !

And, oh ! may the myriad daisies around us,
Be token of days yet to be ;
Like this day whose twilight has far too soon found
us,
The happiest three !

HAD I BUT KNOWN.

Had I but known that nothing is undone
From rising until rising of the sun,
That full-fledged words fly off beyond our reach,
That not a deed brought forth to life dies ever ;
I would have measured out and weighed my
speech,
To bear good deeds had been my sole endeavor—
Had I but known !

Had I but known how swiftly speed away
The living hours that make the living day,
That 'tis above delay's so dangerous slough
Is hung the luring wisp-light of to-morrow;
I would have seized time's evanescent Now!
I would be spared this unavailing sorrow—
Had I but known!

Had I but known to dread the dreadful fire
That lay in ambush at my heart's desire,
Wherefrom it sprang and smote my naked hand,
And left a mark forever to remain:
I would not bear the fire's ignoble brand,
I would have weighed the pleasure with the pain—
Had I but known!

Had I but known we never can repeat
Life's spring-time freshness or its summer heat,
Nor gather second harvest from life's field,
Nor aged winter change to youthful spring;
To me life's flowers their honey all would yield,
I would not feel one wasted moment's sting—
Had I but known!

TUBEROSE.

Flower of the day, fragrant and white, stately and slender,
That sways in the soft summer breeze:
How didst thou know just when to burst forth in thy splendor?
Who told thee the gift that would please?

Oh, flower of our day! from the dead earth, through the live hours,
Distilling thy fragrance, exquisite perfume, delicate flowers:
We will endeavor, even as thou, oh, tuberose in bloom!
Out of this life flowers to bring forth, rich in perfume!

THE CONSERVATIVE RADICAL.

He wrote with skill a strong, satiric sketch,
Abuse and wrong his acid wit did etch:
But ere he broadcast sows himself in print,
And words of steel strike fire with words of flint,
He sought the judgment of his nearest friend,
Who found much to admire and much to mend.
At his advice, with many a pang and doubt,
A dozen passages were stricken out!
"Maidens and wives are partial," he avers,
"Nor relish jeers when cast at ministers."
Unto a second friend the sketch he read—
A convalescent sitting up in bed.
He saw the skill of every rapier-thrust:
Pronounced the punishment severe but just.
'T was his advice (here came a twinge of gout)
Some twenty passages be stricken out!
For there were multitudes, of all conditions,
Whose lives were at the mercy of physicians.
The twice-shorn sketch he read to friend the third,
Who now and then gave an approving word;
'T was good, 't was very good, beyond a doubt—
But fifty passages were ordered out!
The Court inspires a universal awe,
So sneer not at the majesty of law!

Homeward he went much sadder and more wise,
A hidden grief henceforward to disguise:
The shearing left his sketch so closely clipped,
That was his skeleton—in manuscript.

DAY THOUGHTS.

THE mustard-seed a monk once dropped, has grown
To size undreamed of by the stubborn sower:
He loosed upon the mountain-top a stone,
Whose force with every turn but grew the more.

To thoughtful minds who feel the pulse beat fast,
As in an endless chain life's problems move,
There comes the wish to test with hottest blast
The current coin, what dross, what gold to prove:

If, blind to menaces and deaf to threats,
The utter, final residue be found;
So small its value that the seeker frets
To think we should so cheat ourselves with sound.

Like omnipresent, hypothetic germs,
The air is full of true-and-only ways
Of reaching truth; behind high-sounding terms
Anomalies transform to mysteries;

And an eclectic might with them create
A system—the Unknowable, indeed!
Yet when the Answer comes, for which we wait,
He will not have to then unlearn a creed.

Mankind's biography, though meagre yet,
Tells how the race grew wiser age by age,
And warns of dangers that always beset,
To mar the meaning of the living page.

The present is the past's compounded sum;
The latest blossom on that cloud-capp'd tree
Whose countless rings the guides to age become:
And higher, broader, it shall surely be!

MADONNA AND CHILD.

LED by love of art or fashion,
Let who will away to Rome;
There to feel or feign a passion
O'er the picture here at home:

Living picture in home's framing,
Seen by love-light, mellow, mild;
Lovingly I look while naming,
My Madonna and my Child!

Radiant face of happy mother,
Warm with health-born cheerfulness,
Floods the life-sky of another;
Gladly raining rays that bless.

From the roots of life ascending,
See the growing spirit rise!
With the forming features blending;
Eager soul fills eager eyes!

Oh! to seize and fix forever,
In a master-artist's way,
Who, inspired to high endeavor,
Makes immortal mortal clay—

This, the theme's soul, body, spirit,
That incarnate we should see,
Else is lost its chiefest merit,
Whosoe'er the artist be:

The Madonna seen caressing
Trusting Child she soothes to rest;
Each the other's greatest blessing—
Lo! the baby at the breast!

COURAGE.

STRAIGHT for the birthday port once more
The life-ship steers:
The twelve-month cruise this day is o'er,
Her harbor nears.

The costly bale and spice unsold
Are scanned with care:
All are entire—no moth, no mould,
Seen anywhere.

Think not thy hopes at once to change
To golden things;
No one brief voyage, howe'er so strange,
Such fortune brings.

The poet sings of fleeting time,
And art slow-paced:
We yearn to fly; we can but climb;
We do but taste!

What though one voyage fruitless were?
Thy courage keep;
The ship is sound, the sky is fair,
The sea is deep!

And ere to-morrow's sun shall rise,
Up and away!
With steadier hand and clearer eyes
And heart more gay!

JUNE'S OFFERING.

THE earth is bearing treasures of the purple, white, and gold,
In the springtime, the sweet springtime of the year;
And charming as in childhood are her graces manifold,
For the heart-beats of her bosom in incarnate flowers appear!

The scented month of June is living-out her odorous days,
Breathing perfume, the rare perfume of the past!
The past, wherein love growing, burst in bloom of loving lays;
Now flowerful June fulfills herself in fruitful June at last.

Oh! fruitful June, and faithful! unto thee new songs ascend!
Hark! the herald's—infant herald's—lusty cry!
All the yesterdays of wonderment forever at an end,
Since she, the child of Love and June, came crying: "Here am I!"

TURNED AUCHTY.

THE new year gies a waukening toot
In the auld, auld horn that the auld year loot
Drap frae his nieve as he slipped out,
'Mang knee-deep snaw,
To join sax thousan' (millions?—hoot!)
Dead an' awa'!

Gin life still eggs us on, time brings
To livin' sauls sae mony things;
The bairn that by its mammie hings,
The crouse, douce mither;
An' granny wi' her heepit bings,
A' fare thegither!

In land o' bagpipe, claymore, kilt;
The lalland an' the hieland lilt,
Whar logic's haun' is on the hilt
To meet a' comers,
An' weaver lads hae mony a tilt
Wi' poesie's num'ers:

'T was there, sin syne now auchty year,
You were the "wean" my mother dear,
Wi' a' the warl's wark to lear,
Baith joy an' dool,
There teuk your wa's, though aiblins sweer,
To life's hard schule.

To do ane's duty brings sma' fame,
Whan duty, like guidwife, keeps hame,
Else mony a ane had kenned the name
O' saul heroic,
That breed in Greece had put to shame
The sample stoic!

My haud on life's no unco strang,
But sud I keep life's march sae lang,
An' draw at e'enin' frae the thrang,
To rax an' rest;
Like you, content to stay or gang
Wad suit me best.

Ae thocht is upper, air an' late,
O' ane wha's newly ga'en the gaet,
For twa an' fifty years your mate
(Match them wha may !)
But be it man or wife, comes Fate
Wi' death's gray day !

An' now, my mother, dear an' brave,
Frae aff life's laif still tak' your shave :
Wha wadna join—wi' health's gran' glaive—
Your soople corps ?
Rin on ayont the laggin' lave,
An' nick four score !

BODY AND SOUL.

I.

O VISION of beauty ! prisoned in form and face ;
At thy approach her heart beats loud and glad ;
Lacklustre eyes are kindled by thy grace,
And for a space thy sister is not sad.

'T is well for thee no bitter thoughts arise,
And give her homeliness a sharper sting ;
That thou, born beauty, dost thy rare gift prize
Just for the loaves and fishes it will bring !

As Beauty's Queen she feels thy proud control :
Yet thou hast but the body ; she, the soul !

II.

Incarnate song art thou ! Thy every note
Her spell-bound, vibrant, upturned face records !
What god is this who dwells within thy throat
To steep with color those impassioned words ?

Yet this rapt hearer—voiceless, tuneless she !—
With parted lips that fain would drink the strain ;
With soul so shaken by thy melody—
Little she dreams thy only thought is gain !

As Queen of Song she feels thy sweet control :
Yet thou hast but the body ; she, the soul !

THE THEME.

A POET (none truer)
Awoke from a dream
Of a sky brighter, bluer,
And a more golden beam :
"Oh ! gold, and oh ! blue,
Fade not from my view
Ere I find the fair Theme !

"Ah ! where is she hiding
Her poet's embrace ?
My gift be the guiding
Unto her rare face :
I will clothe her in words
From the language of birds,
With unmatchable grace !"

So forthright he sallies
With proud-beating breast ;
Up mountains, down valleys ;
Now east and now west :
He sought on the highways,
He searched in the byways ;
But fruitless the quest !

In woful condition
He sat by a stream ;
And his gift and his mission
Dissolved with his dream !
She that sought him, there found him,
With her presence she bound him—
His radiant Theme !

ALL OR NOTHING.

ALL or nothing, now !
'T is no waxen vow,
Melting at thy breath ;
But fixed as fate and death :
Grant me or refuse—
All or nothing, choose !

Choose ! and end for aye
My supreme suspense ;
Be it yea or nay,
Stay or go I hence :
Thee to have or lose—
All or nothing, choose !

Look far in my eyes,
Whisper, "I will be
Always all to thee !"
Then shall Love arise,
Glad, exultant, proud ;
With new strength endowed ;
All to use for thee :
In Love's hundred ways,
Thee to please and praise !

Surely thou wilt be
Always all to me!

Let me not be stirred
To the depths of dread,
By that dismal word,
Nothing, being said.
At that fatal no,
Love, resolved, will rise,
Forth from the heart to go,
Without tears or sighs,
Sorrowfully and slow;
But with purpose stern,
Never to return!

Gone for aye! And thou—
Save me from my vow!—
Thou shalt with him pass
Out of life, alas!
And where thy name appears,
Up and down the years,
There shall be a blot;
Showing, thou art not!

Is it death or life?
End this cruel strife!
Love in torture sues,
All or nothing, choose!

GOOD-BY!

He has gone! He has left me alone
With dead hopes and sick dreams.
He has gone! Is his heart made of stone?
So it seems—so it seems!

He has blown-out my light with his breath—
And life's lamp nearly full!
He has signed the grim warrant of death
With firm hand and brain cool.
Why will he not openly say,
"I have made her my wife?"
In all else has he had his own way—
Will he now have my life?
If I knew what I lacked in his eyes,
'T were a sweet task to learn!
No master can buy what love buys,
Asking love in return.
It is true he has chosen a maid
Whose whole dowry is love;
But what against love can be weighed?
Is not love wealth enough?
Keeping step with his act and his thought,
As the years come and go;
Doing all that a wife can and ought,
Come weal or come woe!
For the heart makes the home and the hearth;
And in trouble or pain,
He could think of that dear spot of earth
And take courage again!
And this dream would be fact at a word—
But alas! he is dumb!
At my anguish he spake not nor stirred,
And my being grew numb.
Oh! was it for this I was born?
And did dreams mean but this?
Ah! mine is a fate most forlorn:
To aim well and miss!
I had dreamed a dear dream o'er and o'er,
Asleep and awake—

Only nobler to grow evermore—
  Shaping life for his sake.
And he came. To my soul then I spake
  As the rich man of old;
But my riches the morrow did take—
  Can death be more cold?
And the arm that should shield me from harm,
  By day and by night,
Was withdrawn in my direst alarm—
  How I trusted its might!
Does he think I will live to endure
  Either pity or scorn,
When I know that my deeds are as pure
  As our child not yet born?
Does he think I will flinch at the last,
  And the deadly draught spill?
When I meet with gaunt Death turn aghast,
  Weak as water the will?
Ah! he knows not that death has for me
  Only secrets to tell;
That I long from this life to be free,
  Bidding earth a farewell!
As the sand has been choked in my glass,
  Naught is left but to die;
Life and dreams are mere shadows that pass—
  So to life-dreams, good-by!

BEFORE I GO.

Before I go with thee, O beckoning Death!
Let me more deeply breathe this potent breath;
That our great gardener, Life, whom much I owe,
May somewhat be repaid before I go.

For am not I her seed? her tender shoot?
Her slender sapling, slowly taking root?
Her tree in bloom? in whose first bearing year,
Before the blossoms are gone, lo, thou art here!

Shadow of Life! Before I go with thee
Where hand nor voice can reach, nor eye can see,
Oh! let me longer use my heritage;
So I may fill life's partly written page.
Let life's great play move onward to the end,
And I be lover, husband, father, friend;
Knight-errant, eager to move and mould mankind,
Set free the weak, the strong to break and bind.
Oh! touch not now my life-warm heart and brain,
For ere I pass to nothingness again,
All would I be that man may, and would do
Some worthy thing to set me with the few.

Let life's oil burn till the flame be faint and low,
O Death! before I go!

UNFRAMED.

THE sun, that fell all afternoon
From mid-height heaven in mid-month June,
Has touched the far, warm West, and, lo!
It sinks in the earth like April snow;
While clouds of crimson, purple, and gray
Are anchored about in the burnished bay;
And the sea of glad, green leaves is stirred
At the soft southwest wind's whispered word.

The spell-bound painter looked with awe
On the earth-wide, heaven-high scene he saw,

While one ecstatic moment passed,
Then turned, exultant, to make fast
With cunning hand, that very hour,
The secret placed within his power.

Alas! he lost it on the way;
For in no frame is it seen to-day!

THE END OF THE WORLD.

He wakes at dawn of that predestined day
Whereon the heavens and earth shall pass away.
The unconscious sun springs upward in the east,
And stirs to life the insect, bird, and beast.
No instinct warns them that the end has come;
Some subtle charm has stricken Nature dumb.
Unknown to flower and fruit is the ominous plot;
And even his fellow-mortals know it not.

But he had searched the Scriptures, line by line;
Had pondered long and deep on symbol and sign,
Their many meanings through his mind revolved,
Ere was the great prophetic riddle solved.

In perfect faith he waited for this hour;
While will-o'-the-wisps, called fame and wealth and power,
Were luring others unto death, or worse,
His thoughts were centred on one steadfast verse,
Wherein the fate of all things hidden lay—
'T was there he found that the world would end this day.

As hour by hour of the day of doom passed on,
His soul but grew more eager to be gone:
High noon is reached; but ere the neighboring bell
Has time the mid-day record half to tell,
Some stronger arms than Samson's seize the town
And strive to throw its thousand houses down:
A rumble and roar, that make the blood run chill,
Announce to all—it is the powder mill!

The waiting soul had heard the last trump's sound;
Whereat his heart gave one great, fatal bound,
Then stopped for aye! . . . . . .
And thus for him the world did end that day!

THE TRUE SKEPTIC.

A STATE forlorn! O man unfortunate!
With face averted from the living light;
Fearing, like Festus, lest thou lose thy sight,
Should knowledge pierce thine eye's unopened gate.
What evil thing did she, that thou should hate
Thy mother, Nature? that by day and night,
With cloud and pillar, leadeth thee aright,
Even thou, with heart so unregenerate!

Oh! that thou wouldst give heed to what she saith;
Repent and turn and follow her in faith:
Then when from doubts thy soul is shaken free,
The trust in law will make thee calm and strong;
And faith in man's perfectibility
Will give the burden to thy sacred song.

IN TIME.

THE day peeped into the wild flower's cup,
And a dewdrop gem there lay;
The sun slipped in and drew it up,
And dissolved it in his ray:
The wild flower dressed in beauty's best,
Did nod at the sun o'erhead;
But ere it stooped to kiss the West,
The wild flower dropped down dead!

Another day, and the little weed
Itself had ceased to be;
It rested, after flower and seed,
At the foot of the stately tree;
And the stately tree that hid the sun
Within its leafy crown,
That, rooted fast, long braved the blast,
At last came tumbling down!

The years laid hold of the mass of stone,
The home of an ancient name,
Whose halls such life and pride had known,
And a ruin it became!
The dewdrop dried, the wild flower died,
And ended the plant and tree;
And fame and pride lay side by side—
But the sun still rose to see!

THE UNKNOWN GOD.

ALAS! and has the search still ended so?
To-day to raise the altar without name;
Man's bare, poor power and thy armed sense the same!

Oh! thou late seeker, sadly saying "No!"
My heart is sore to see thy self-wrought woe!
Since breathless now, no worse for thee if lame.
What speck in farthest space didst take as aim,
When father's God and Nature proved too low?

Thy Greekish mind would fuse in unity
The omnipresent Force we feel and see;
And magnify, as thwarted children do,
The hidden side, set under secret spell.
Behold! before all other gods, thy new
And Unknown God, who is Unknowable!

THE TIME TO WEEP.

THERE was a time to dream:
Dear dreams of life as a long, whole holiday;
Me rich and learned in childhood's hazy way:
Then unto Time, so high was my esteem,
Gave I the keys, that he the treasures keep;
Then came the sun, with dream-dispelling beam;
And, well awakened from my golden sleep,
Now is the time to weep!

There was a time to strive:
Yea, stoutly strive; when the vivid, far ideal
Lent strength to strive more great than any real.
Though from the battle I came forth alive,
No victory along the line I reap;
Nor nothing will my fainting soul revive,
And make my heart in exultation leap:
Now is the time to weep!

There was a time to trust:
Trust in the power to move mankind and make
The cold, dead, iron form and figure take:
  But failures fix my epitaph in rust;
For while to-morrows on to-morrows creep,
  Hot hope grows stiff. Oh! golden dust to dust!
And fallen, helpless, hopeless, from my purpose steep,
    Now is the time to weep!

Yet let the time go by!
If dreams be dead; strife tame, and fast asleep;
And trust, a cast-off garment—still, why weep?
  Let memory stop the tears and clear the eye:
Was not the dream while dream reality?
  Did not the striving make the pulse beat high?
And trust fill well the place of victory?
    No time to weep for me!

AN HONEST GREEK.

Advice and counsel I would seek;
I am a simple-minded Greek:
Not yet deceived, not yet deceiver;
Believer not, nor unbeliever:
My mind will well repay your toil,
Since it is very virgin soil.

So tell me, strong Iconoclast,
Since you've pulled down the mighty Past,
And gods and ghosts, pell-mell, lie dead,
What do you give me in their stead?

In place of God, you offer me
Ineffable Reality;

Who makes each forceful fact a throne,
And sits the Unknowable-Unknown !
Of Spirit you have left no trace ;
But set up Ether in its place !
And Miracles, to my dim notion,
You match with subtle Modes of Motion !
Then, for your rival's rod and staff,
You proffer me your greatest 'Graph !
And with his blessed book to cope,
You bring to me your strongest 'Scope !
While Faith and Love and Hope become
Important Factors in life's sum !

My umpire, reason, well affirms
That I have but a choice of terms ;
And warns me, if I choose your list,
I'll be a mere, mere scientist—
A pseudo, so-called scientist !
So, on the whole—with pain I speak—
I think I'll live and die a Greek !

UNSOPHISTICATED.

He fixed the price—ten thousand and no less ;
Rehearsed the thrilling situations o'er ;
Next day his play returned by fast express :
'T was great ! immense ! but had been done before !

He fixed his fame—of novelists the first ;
Each photoed friend would buy at least a score :
Next week his bubble reputation burst !
His plot was good, but had been done before !

He fixed the very morning he would wake
  Immortal!—but the postman passed the door:
His theme was great; but they declined to take;
  They really thought it had been done before!

Ergo:

The dramatist reviled the modern stage;
  The novelist turned critic to the core;
The poet wrote to please some future age—
  Had they but known! These things were done before!

MORE LIFE.

WELL-PLEASED with the tale the years unfold,
Before all foes, but Death, most bold,
He clings to life with desperate hold!

Till by his infant heir beguiled,
When Death's dread visage grows half mild;
Since he will live-on in his child.

Or, soothed by Fame's sweet sedative,
He wraps his soul in words that give
More life, when he shall cease to live!

EPIGRAMS.

TO-DAY.

IF you wait to be glad with To-morrow,
  You will die old and sad on the way;
Know you not whom you sigh for and sorrow,
  Walks with you, disguised as To-day?

MY SHIPS.

"PROMISE me something ever so nice,
When your ship comes in," said she.
I would promise a dozen things in a trice,
Oh, little lass on my knee!
But ships of mine, for many a year,
Have been worse than an empty cup;
And the next to arrive, like the rest, I fear,
Will be washed-in bottom up!

THE WORST.

OF all the multitude of woes
With which mankind is cursed,
What can't be cured nor be endured,
Must surely be the worst!

FOR A TITLE PAGE.

DRAMATIZE, print, or translate if you will,
To treatment like that I am nerved;
But add not nor take for my good or my ill,
For the right to misquote is reserved.

THE BUBBLE.

OF the beautiful bubble he blew,
Naught is left but a rain-drop quivering!
'T is a story as sad as true,
A beautiful bubble he blew,
That bore his soul's sevenfold hue;
While from error and wrong delivering:
Of that beautiful bubble he blew,
Naught is left but a tear-drop quivering!

THE VOICE.

THE voice of the wind in the night,
Sobbing and shrieking and moaning!
Few wake from their dreams of delight,
At the voice on the wind in the night,
Crying, "Life is a burden, a blight!
Oh! for what is our misery atoning?"
That voice on the wind in the night,
Sobbing and shrieking and moaning!

AUTUMN LEAVES.

OH, shower of the autumn leaves!
That tells of a year's completeness.
My musing spirit grieves
O'er a shower of autumn leaves,
Whereof now memory weaves
A tale, full of truth and sweetness:
Oh, shower of autumn leaves,
That tells of a deed's completeness!

MAY IN DECEMBER.

MAY in December! for the sun
Sets aside the settled season,
On thy birthday this we've done
For an all-sufficing reason:
Fate bids her December shake
Snow upon Hope's living ember—
Knowing not Love's sun can make
May in December!

THE MAIDEN'S MIND.

WHAT good is a mind
  That one cannot change?
"Cabin'd, cribb'd, and confined"
What good is a mind?
Be mine like the wind,
  Round the compass to range!
—I have now half a mind
  This opinion to change!

ERRATA.

THE year's twelve chapters, written by myself,
  Complete for me life's very latest book;
But ere it is bound and placed on memory's shelf,
  Once more for errors let me take a look.
* * * * * * * *
Alas! for this my very good intent;
Why, here 's enough to fill a supplement!

SONGS.

THE MILLER'S SON.

(Set to music by William Stobbe.)

WHY is it the birds sing sweeter to-day?
Why is the sky so bright?
Why is it that time flies fleeter to-day,
And the moments are winged with delight?
All the day long
She is thinking of one,
None so handsome and strong—
The miller's son.
For he loves her, he loves her; and, whisper it low,
'T was only last night that he told her so!

To what is her heart set dancing to-day?
Hark to that glad refrain!
How oft in the glass she 's glancing to-day,
And eagerly watching the lane.
Home, home again,
All his duties well done,
Comes the noblest of men—
The miller's son!
Oh! he 's coming, he 's coming, he 's well on the way;
And to-morrow, to-morrow 's the wedding day.

Why is it she lies there so cold, still and white?
What is it has turned her glad noon into night?

Off into space
The swift engine rushed
With a mighty leap!
Then down, down, down!
To kill and drown:
No moment of grace;
But mangled and crushed,
Heap upon heap!
And the foremost one
Was the miller's son!
More bright grow her eyes and more faint grows her breath;
And she marries, she marries the bridegroom—Death!

FOR EVER AND EVER.

The Morn, immortal,
Flings wide the portal;
Enter: the sun-born Day,
Whose sole desire
Is higher, higher,
Till noon is crowned; and then to pass away!

The Spring, immortal,
Flings wide the portal;
Enter: the sun-born Year,
With life to dower
Beast, bird, and flower,
Midsummer to crown; and then to disappear!

And Life, immortal,
Flings wide the portal;

Enter: sun-kindled Clay,
To burn each hour
For fame, wealth, power;
And fed or quenched, at last to pass away!

DOWN THE GREEN LANE.

(Set to music by Frank L. Armstrong.)

SOFT was the breeze on that morning in May;
Down the green lane she went tripping along:
Apple tree, apple tree, tell me, I pray,
Why does she pause in the heart of her song?
Is she ensnared by the Spirit of Spring,
Hid in thy tender green boughs up above?
Dark, dancing eyes, like a bird on the wing,
Passing have greeted with signal of love!

Warm was the air on that evening in June;
Down the green lane went the man and the maid:
Apple tree, apple tree, hiding the moon,
Why are they lingering there in thy shade?
Are they entrapped by thy blossoming sprite,
Peeping from pink-and-white boughs up above?
Half-stolen kisses and words of delight,
Hasten the buds into blossoms of love!

Cloudless the sky on that midsummer noon;
Down the green lane once again they have passed:
Apple tree, apple tree, laden so soon,
Thou knewest all from the first to the last!
Was not the Spirit that slept in thy root,
Rising in spring to the branches above,
Budding and blooming and now bearing fruit,
Spirit of Nature and Spirit of Love?

EBB AND FLOW.

(Set to music by George Loesch.)

SWIFTER than swallows fly, speeding-on silently,
westward the way;
Run is the race of the sun, and the face of him hid-
den from day;
World-woven veil is drawn, hiding his life-giving,
light-giving ray.

Day with thy duties done, Day with thy pleasures
past, Day that art dead;
Earth was thy mother, the sun was thy father, now
night is thy bed:
Born at the dawning and dying at twilight, with
stars at thy head!

Swung by the impulse of life in us dwelling, we stop
not nor stay;
Beating our measures out—high spirits, low spirits—
day after day;
Love while the blood is red, hope while the heart is
hot, live while we may!

SOMETHING IN THE AIR.

(Set to music by Selmar Meyer.)

SHE gives her pretty mouth a pout, her saucy head
she shakes,
Till again the daisy dances in the air;
While the light within her bright blue eyes a dozen
changes makes,
As she sings for him that tender song of love so
true and rare.

I dare say 't was the air of it, but ere he is aware of it,
He 's hers ! without a moment to prepare !
For his heart that was asleep in him, it gave a mighty leap in him,
And all because, and all because of something in the air !
Oh ! I know that there was something, oh ! I'm sure that there was something,
Oh ! I know that there was something in the air !
There was something, there was something, oh ! I'm sure that there was something,
Oh ! I know that there was something in the air !

The language of his dark eyes she was quick to understand,
And it set the strangest feeling stealing o'er ;
While his manner said so plainly that his heart was in his hand,
As he handed her the daisy that had fallen on the floor.
I dare say 't was the air of it, but ere she is aware of it,
She 's his ! without a moment to prepare !
For her heart that was asleep in her, it gave a tiny leap in her,
And all because, and all because of something in the air !
Oh ! I know, etc.

He had sworn he would not married be for many and many a year :
She had vowed her only love was in the moon ;

But both were much mistaken, as it quickly did appear.
For she fixed for him the happy day in that very month of June!
I dare say 't was the air of it, but ere they were aware of it,
To join these hearts and hands they did prepare!
For their hearts they had so leapt in them, they really could not be kept in them,
And all because, and all because of something in the air!
Oh! I know, etc.

IF ONLY.

THE dew to the daisy was clinging,
When the Angel of Death drew near;
The birds to the blossoms were singing—
Oh! to be free from fear!
And he, full of fears at dying,
Longing to pluck and eat;
Why from life's feast to be flying?
Must he die when to live is sweet?
O Angel, dread Angel! Oh, stay thee!
Turn thy merciless sword away!
If only a little, I pray thee!
Then thy merciless sword may slay.

The rose and the lily were blended,
And the motionless grain but grew,
When the Angel of Death descended
Out of the peaceful blue;

And he, without fear at dying,
Grieves for the deeds half done.
Why on life's battlefield lying?
Must he fall ere the fight be won?
O Angel, dread Angel! Oh, stay thee!
Turn thy merciless sword away!
If only a little, I pray thee!
Then thy merciless sword may slay.

The sky and the leaves they were plighted
With the glorious sunset glow,
When the Angel of Death alighted,
Ready to deal his blow!
And he, full of fears and sighing,
Now that his work is done,
Longs to have rest before dying.
Must he cease while there's sand to run?
O Angel, dread Angel! Oh, stay thee!
Turn thy merciless sword away!
If only a little, I pray thee!
Then thy merciless sword may slay.

MY LITTLE BIRD.

CRADLE SONG.

(Set to music by William Stobbe.)

Now the sun sinks in the west,
Little bird, take warning!
Fly away to your own little nest,
In the tall tree top, where the moon comes to peep
While you sleep, sleep, sleep!
I have a dear little birdie; guess, now, who can she be?
Golden hair I love the best,

Dimpled face adorning;
Restless feet that at last are at rest,
And a tireless tongue that is still until the morning!
My little bird who is tucked in her nest.

Bright blue eyes I love the best,
Close their lids, my starling:
Cuddled in your cosy nest,
Sleep, my little darling!
Little darling, sleep, sleep, sleep!

Though the sun has run away,
Where we cannot follow,
He'll return with as bright a new day,
If the little birds while he's gone will not peep,
But will sleep, sleep, sleep!
I have a dear little birdie; guess, now, where can she be?
Since the daylight's gone away,
Shuts her eyes to follow;
Sleeps and waits for the beautiful day
That the sun is sure for to bring with whoop and hallo!
Sleep, little bird, till the sun brings the day!

UNLESS I CHANGE MY MIND.

(Set to music by Fred T. Baker.)

She shook her head, and pursed her lips,
And beat time with her fan;
And then set forth, with emphasis,
Her well-digested plan:

To never, never fall in love,
At any time of life ;
And never, never to become
Of any one the wife !

The lover heard, in dire dismay,
Her cruel proclamation ;
But did not know for many a day
Her mental reservation—
"Unless I change my mind !"

"I'll never fall in love, oh, no !
I'm sure I'll never feel inclined ;
I'll never marry, that I know !—
Unless I change my mind !"

He pressed her hand, he kissed her lips,
She never said him nay ;
But vowed before the minister
Upon her wedding day,
To ever, ever love but him
Throughout her wedded life ;
And ever, ever honor and
Obey him as his wife.

The bridegroom heard, with heart so gay,
Her tender proclamation ;
But did not know for many a day
Her mental reservation—
"Unless I change my mind !"

"I'll ever love him from this day !
I'm sure I'll ever feel inclined ;
I'll ever honor and obey—
Unless I change my mind !"

BEAUTY ABOUT THEE.

Beauty about thee! At the sun-set hour,
When cloud and sky make wonders in the west;
Morning in springtime; the pale-blue fragile flower;
The midnight sky in starry raiment dressed;
The wind-tossed woods; the wave-tossed sea:
Beauty about thee eternally!

Beauty about thee! Lo! the moment's glory,
Forever fading, mocks thy helpless art.
The star and flower have stirred thee with a story
Thy meagre speech is powerless to impart.
Unseized, untold, forever free:
Beauty about thee eternally!

AFTER ALL.

(Set to music by Frank L. Armstrong.)

From rise of sun to long past setting
'T is toil and turmoil, strife and strain;
Life's battle cry is "Still be getting!"
For man's chief end is gain.
But whether all you touch turn yellow;
Or be you known from cot to hall;
Death greets you as the same, Hail fellow!
There is one fate for all!

When all things glad and sad are ended;
And time has fled beyond recall;
Life's arrow shot, the bow unbended,
There is one fate for all!

If life was meant to be a battle;
And men were made to fight for toys:
For wealth, the bauble; fame, the rattle;
And miss life's truest joys—
The heart's desire is brief and brittle,
And soon we stop at life's blank wall;
If rich or poor, if great or little,
There is one fate for all!

ART WITHOUT ART.

With the diamond-point, day, have you wrought a whole year,
To engrave in the stone the intaglio, here:
All the thoughts, all the deeds of the year on it trace,
Ere the gem upon Life's golden cord finds its place.

Now memory awakes at the melody's word;
And a strain from Life's lyrical drama is heard:
'Tis a spark to the train of the years that are through,
And lo! all their treasures are flashed into view.

But the necklace will fill, and the artist will stop:
But the drama will end, and the green curtain drop:
Be the music so sweet, be the jewel so rare,
That memory shall listen, that memory shall wear!

COME SAIL WITH ME.

(Set to music by Frank L. Armstrong.)

Low in the west have the earth and the sky
Met in a mist for the sun to enfold;
Dusk sends its star to behold the day die,
Sight ever sad, ever new, ever old!

Listlessly over the waters we 'll veer,
  Light as a bird as it floats on the blue;
Deep in the glass of the stream we will peer,
  Watching the clouds that the boat passes through.

Out of the east comes the queen of the night,
  Red with the breath of the life of the earth;
Up past the spire till her robe is pure white,
  Then to look down upon sadness and mirth;
Now points the prow to the glow-worms on shore;
  On, ever on, like the shaft to its mark;
Sing we in time to the dip of the oar;
  Lightly at last leap we out of the bark.

Love, oh, my love! let us nevermore part!
  Trust thyself now and forever with me!
Sail on for life in the care of my heart;
  Safe as at home in the midst of the sea!
Now be it ebb, be it flow of the tide;
  Now be the sun or the moon up above,
Since thou wilt sail evermore at my side,
  On, ever on, in the good ship of Love!

SONG OF THE SENSES.

(Set to music by George Loesch.)

We serve without hire
  Our master—our slave!
We send him desire,
  As wave upon wave.

We lure, and he follows,
  With the bait in his mouth;
Like the far-flying swallows,
  That scent the sweet South.

We heal and we sicken
From birth to the grave;
We kill and we quicken
Our master—our slave!

SONG OF THE SEASONS.

(Set to music by A. Sinzheimer.)

THE Spring awakes to life and love;
And Earth is bright in white and green:
A dress we never weary of,
Though thousand times it may be seen.
And now, again, both heart and brain,
Are subjects of her flowery reign:
The sweetest season of the year,
Sweet Spring is here! Sweet Spring is here!

The Summer stands in green and gold;
And life and love have won the day:
The Sun has reached his place of old,
And ripens with his fervent ray.
Soft breezes blow; the boughs hang low;
The work of all is but to grow:
The sweetest season of the year,
Sweet Summer's here! Sweet Summer's here!

The Autumn moves from field to field,
'Mong mellow fruit and golden grain;
And takes the foliage for her shield,
When in the woods she's caught and slain.
She gave her sheaves; she gives her leaves,
Now stained as o'er her fate she grieves:
The sweetest season of the year,
Sweet Autumn's here! Sweet Autumn's here!

The Winter winds now keenly blow,
The starry host is great and near,
The Earth puts-on her mantle, snow ;
And all the streams their glasses clear,
The ride that's worth its length in mirth,
The nuts and stories 'round the hearth :
The dearest season of the year,
Dear Winter's here ! Dear Winter's here !

AWAY TO THE WOODS !

(A MAY-DAY SONG, BY CHILDREN.)

AWAY to the woods, away !
To the woods on the first of May ;
And there to be a rover,
Upon this holiday.
We are free as the birds are free ;
We are off to the woods with glee ;
Since Winter's sway is over,
And the face of Spring we see !

We will drink at the hidden springs ;
We will harken when robin sings ;
And watch the blue-bird flying
Upon such pretty wings :
We are stirred by the springtime sun ;
We will dance, we will climb, and run ;
In secret places prying ;
And ever in search of fun !

We will wander for hours and hours ;
We will gather the wildwood flowers,
That have been watched and tended
By April's sun and showers :

But long ere the crop we reap,
The moon at the sun will peep,
And day with night be blended ;
Then homeward we will creep !

FIRST LOVE.

As the first flowers of spring from the earth's bosom start,
To meet the warm sun and the rain ;
So is love, slipping-out of the half-opened heart,
To greet the first sweetheart or swain :
But fleet are the feet of the year in the spring,
And brief is the bloom of the flower ;
Like the delicate dust on the butterfly's wing,
Is the charm of love's earliest hour.

Oh ! first flowers of love, that have bloomed for a day,
And the garden of life have made bright ;
Though the future come flaunting in richer array
The heart will not thrill at the sight :
As soon from youth's chalice a second draught drain,
With the foam and the sparkle above,
Or change to a gem the cold ashes again,
As to bring back the birthday of love !

BIRTHDAY MORNING SERENADE.

TO FANNIE.

NIGHT now spreads his sable pinions,
With the darkness flies away,
Off to yesterday's dominions,
Since the sky is growing gray :

May sweet dreams his burden be,
Dreams that harbor thoughts of me:
Night now spreads his sable pinions,
'Tis the dawning of the day!

Day has entered through the portal
Opened by the sun-god's beam;
God who makes the day immortal,
Earth and air with life to teem:
May the day o'erburdened be
With long hours made glad for thee:
Day has entered through the portal
And the deed dispels the dream.

With the night thy year has ended—
Sad or glad it would not stay;
And the day, by love attended,
Sets thee in thy new year's way:
How or where soe'er we be,
Love will walk 'twixt thee and me:
Be thy new year as a splendid
Hour from June's most perfect day!

JACK AND JOE.

While Joe was with me yesterday,
Unto myself he heard me say:
"My darling! My darling!"
And straight he answers: "I am here!
What is it that you wish, my dear?"
My lip curled up, my brows curled down;
I spoke beneath a fearful frown:
"My darling's name is Jack!"

His face grew red and then grew white,
Just like the roses there in sight.
"I do not think I heard quite plain!"
And so I told him once again:
"My darling's name is Jack!"
"Since mine is Joe," said he, "I'll go!"
And there he stood and waited, though;
For I said neither yes nor no,
But stooped and plucked my darling rose,
For jealous Joe before he goes!
My darling *Jacque*minot!

LOVE'S REVEILLE.

(Set to music by William Stobbe.)

NIGHT'S robe is riven
From off the heaven;
The sun has striven
For day's dear sake:
O'er hilltops leaping,
His ray comes peeping
At thee, still sleeping:
Awake!
Oh, Love, awake! Awake!

Cease, cease to wander
In the dim land yonder;
Fond love, grown fonder,
Thy bonds would break.
What fate befalls thee?
While sleep enthralls thee,
And love's voice calls thee:
Awake!
Oh, Love, awake! Awake!

True love and tender!
The day's defender
Mounts-up in splendor:
Unclose thine eyes.
The morn is fleeting,
Haste, haste our meeting,
The day completing:
Arise!
Oh, Love, arise! Arise!

A MADRIGAL.

(Set to music by William Stobbe.)

DAY, who wills us joy that thrills us,
Oh, that time were chained to thee!
Thou being sweeter, night comes fleeter;
Soon thy sun shines but in memory!

Night, who wills us grief that chills us,
Oh, that time were loosed from thee;
Dawn o'ertakes thee, power forsakes thee;
Thy grim face grows dim in memory!

Pain and pleasure in the measure,
So runs-on life's poetry:
Time, who wills us death that kills us,
Keep, oh, keep us long in memory!

SWEET THOUGHTS OF THEE.

(Set to music by A. Sinzheimer.)

SWEET thoughts of thee, my love,
Open the heart;
Wishes fly out, my love,
Rise and depart:

Winging their way, my love,
Ceaseless the beat,
Till they fold wings, my love,
Glad at thy feet!

Wisdom will choose, my love,
Solemn and soon,
One whose whole heart, my love,
Knows but one tune.
She surely shall, my love,
Cling close to thee.
Proud as a king, my love
Thou then wilt be.

With word-wings of love, my love,
Longing to fly
From the heart of my heart, my love,
To the height of love's sky,
Waits the last wish, my love,
Dare I express?
No! The sweet wish, my love,
Canst thou not guess?

HERE WE GO!

(Set to music by Adam Geibel.)

THE sun 's in the sky and the wind 's in the west;
Here we go, here we go up!
And health and good spirits to life give a zest;
Here we go, here we go up!
The wavering vane to the eastward now veers;
And clouds overspread, and the sun disappears;
While smiles change to sighs, and sweet hopes turn
to fears—

Here we come, here we come down!
Here we go, here we go up, up, up!
And here we come, here we come down!

Good Fortune has shed her bright smile on our way;
Here we go, here we go up!
And onward we travel, light-hearted and gay;
Here we go, here we go up!
But now, on a sudden, the road makes a bend;
We lose sight of Fortune and many a friend;
And things go from bad unto worse to the end—
Here we come, here we come down!
Here we go, here we go up, up, up!
And here we come, here we come down!

And is not our life at the best like a day?
Here we go, here we go up!
It dawns, and the new-risen sun takes his way;
Here we go, here we go up!
Through youth and through manhood on Time's wings we fly;
And mount to the uttermost height of the sky;
Then sink to sweet rest in the west, by and by—
Here we come, here we come down!
Here we go, here we go up, up, up!
And here we come, here we come down!

NIGHT AND MORNING.

The long, long weary day
In work has passed away;
And homeward, yearning,
His steps are turning.

Oh! 'tis a thought most sweet,
The loved ones soon to meet;
With them forgetting
All toil and fretting.

The brief, brief hours have flown,
The few he calls his own.
Oh! small the measure
That holds such pleasure.
And now, good-night, good-night,
Till comes the dawn's faint light;
His way then wending
To work unending!

PANEL AND PLAQUE AND TILE.

(Set to music by Frank L. Armstrong.)

Miss Marion Meade was so full of art
(Panel and plaque and tile)
She never once dreamed that she had a heart
(Panel and plaque and tile):
But while she was painting on china with skill,
And firing with care in her portable kiln,
Her thoughts they would wander against her sweet will—
(Panel and plaque and tile).

O Marion Meade! Take heed! Take heed!
You will never succeed, I'll wager!
To dip for hearts with the minor arts,
Is to fish with a line both short and fine—
Had you better not try the major?
For the minor try the major!

But Marion thought she could win with art
(Panel and plaque and tile),
For she knew all the rules and the terms by heart
(Panel and plaque and tile):
She sketched upon linen, she modeled in clay,
She worked both in leather and brass *repoussé*,
And pen-and-ink studies came quite in her way—
(Panel and plaque and tile).

Fred knew not the daisies and poppies apart
(Panel and plaque and tile),
And so she relinquished that style of art
(Panel and plaque and tile):
She packed all her outfits far out of her reach;
She learned all the things that her mother could teach;
And soon her dear Fred made his sweet little speech—
(Panel and plaque and tile).

FAIRMOUNT PARK.

Oh! the merry, happy-hearted May,
Through the park is tripping lightly;
And the merry maiden marks her way
With the flowers that blossom brightly.
Now the leaves grow green and glossy;
Hear ye not the robins sing?
And the lovers' banks grow mossy,
Since the coming of the Spring.
Far too long the Winter's will was law,
And life lay prone before him;
And snow for grass too long we saw,
Now Spring is victor o'er him:

Welcome Spring — Spring! Welcome Spring—
Spring!
That such rich treasures brings.
Welcome Spring — Spring! Welcome Spring—
Spring!
That bids all Nature sing.
Spring so dear, sweet Spring is here!

Now, away we go in search of flowers;
While we muse on bygone pleasures:
What prince had ever park like ours,
So bright with Nature's treasures?
All the dreams that poets cherish,
All the themes that stir the soul,
In our pleasant park we nourish,
As around the seasons roll:
From the hill we see the Schuylkill bend,
In the glen the mimic river;
While in fields and woods gay colors blend,
In a fashion set forever.
Through the park, hark! In the park, mark!
The birds and flowers of Spring;
Through the park, hark! In the park, mark!
The sounds and sights of Spring.
Spring so dear, sweet Spring is here!

THE PARTING TOAST.

(Set to music by William Stobbe.)

As here we stand with glass in hand
And wait the parting toast,
The pleasures of our meeting we recall;
When like to-night the years take flight,
Farewell to life, our host—

Here's love and fun and friendship for us all!
Good luck unto us all!
Good luck unto us all!
Here's love and fun and friendship for us all!

Whene'er we go to where we go
The happiness we'll share;
Though some with fearful stories would appall!
But as it's clear how we came here,
So, haply, is it there—
Here's love and fun and friendship for us all!
Good luck unto us all!
Good luck unto us all!
Here's love and fun and friendship for us all!

If more there be for you and me
When this first meal is done,
And for all who ever trod this fiery ball;
When life has fled, and earth is dead
And dropped into the sun—
Here's love and fun and friendship for us all!
Good luck unto us all!
Good luck unto us all!
Here's love and fun and friendship for us all!

IDYLS OF THE QUEEN.

ROBINETTE.

Of the bird's great loss and grievous, and the shock
Of that catastrophe whose knowledge dire
Wrought grief unutterable and deepest woe,
Sing, Heavenly Muse ! that erst unto the verge
Of vastest throng didst cling, and hear, and note ;
And now dost sing of the ceremony sad,
In ashy sackcloth clad. What in me flags
Accelerate ; and what is true make truer ;
That through the length of this new narrative
I may assert the certainty of death ;
And after death, the funeral to come,
Showing the victim of Fate's arrow needs
No frantic friend to fight the air for him,
But burial. And so, methinks, to show
The attenuated tenure of this life,
And palliate the fixedness of fate.
  Say first and last the truth, and see to it
That thou dost spin the story out entire,
And let no thread of error mar the web !
Say, didst thou hear (and if not thou, oh, who?)
The myriad heart-beat quick and quicker grow
Throughout the vast assemblage there convened ?
Yea, even an ague chill didst thrill thy heart,
When at thy distant post—the outermost—
And unconcerted chorus reached thy ears

Once, and dropped down ; revived and outward ran
Twice, and grew faint and fell ; then rising rushed
Thrice ; and the question horrible was put—
"Who killed Cock Robin?" Earth and sky said
"Who?"
The new-born echo, breathing once, expired ;
And universal silence smothered all !
Then time flew by unharmed. If such a space
Did lengthen to an hour, a day, a year,
We reck not ; rather than halt here and solve,
Make more or less, ad lib.
And who—and who
Had killed Cock Robin? Who? A simple question,
Easier raised than Robin lying there
With the mark of Abel on his poor, poor breast!
From out the unexpectant host a Sparrow small
Flew up. None less significant saluted heaven
Of all the sorrowing host. His lot it was,
And worthily, to serve as synonym
For unconsidered trifles ; mustard seeds.
He was so small, that, rather than be less,
Cared not to be at all—at all ! One word,
A shrill small word, did pierce the air : 't was "I ;"
And then, anon, this archer-fiend kept on :
"With my bow and arrow, I killed Cock Robin."
With one accord, in monochord, they cried :
"Thrice cursèd bow ; abominable arrow !"
No cause there stands down to this very day,
Why he killed Robin. Antiquaries, dressed
In holy patches dropped from meals of moths,
Have given it up as one of those dark things
No Fellow of the Royalest Society
Seeking can find ; so let it rest in peace !
What private grudge he had that made him shoot,

Indeed! we know not; neither if he were
That instant temporarily insane—
A subtle state of the blood, when all its mild,
Soft iron vaults per saltum o'er itself
Into a magnet for a moment's space,
To pull the long-bow then, the trigger now;
Then lapse into the normal, docile state.
They set no price, no fifth-of-a-farthing price,
Upon his head: so was he safe that day.
The old law, logical as lunatics,
That ever substituted similars,
To wit: took heat for fever, blood for blood—
This law (he knew) had been repealed one week.
Oh, say! What did they do? What could they do?
It being not lawful to exterminate,
Or throw up aught in malice at him!
Life had been robbed from Robin, ruthlessly;
He shot and killed—enough for them to know.
Yet, not enough, since even birds are birds.
With awful anxious eye each looked at each
Swift seconds six; like shipwrecked sailors mute,
Shaping the same queer query as to "Who?"
And then the acclamation question came:
(Murder will out) "Who saw him die?" A pause:
"With my little eye, I saw him die!" They look,
And lo, a little Fly! And why a Fly
Confound this mighty host? Ah! there's the rub:
For at that simple speech what visions rise,
And dance, disquieting the long-lulled soul;
A resurrection hour for deeds well done,
And quickly. Therefore all unsweet to know
There is a microscopic eye to mark
Doings of daylight, twilight, yea, of night!

A momentary spasm, swallowed-up
By the master fit of curiosity.
  Their blood being up, they cried "Who caught his
    blood?"
The cold and sluggish-blooded Fish spoke up
As thus: "With my little dish I caught his blood."
Oh, most appropriate receiver! Oh,
Receptacle the same! How wise it was
His blood should warm the cold veins of the Fish!
  Investigation dying here, gave place
To living issues: duties to the dead.
For then the dead knew not the after art,
Themselves to burn or bury; happier we!
And first the offices must needs be filled;
And strange to say, all spoke not up at once;
But severally, saying "I," and "I," and "I."
Since labor's subdivision was in vogue,
Each eligible applicant did add
Qualifications fit; which wiser we
Dispense with now—oh, golden age of ours!
  Behold the cast: the untrodden Beetle first,
Whose mental anguish who can tell
When poor Cock Robin died? Now offers he
With thread and needle Robin's shroud to make.
With super-birdlike effort, next, the Owl
Gave over moping, starts and stares, and speaks
Of spade and eke of shovel, wherewithal
To put to bed poor Robin, dead and gone.
The chirping Linnet left the blue-veined wrist,
To light with link the solemn cortege on.
The cooing, murmuring, moaning Dove,
Beloved and loving Robin, felt his death
Most bitterly; chief mourner over all.
The Lark left half his lay at heaven's gate,

To be but clerk at Robin's obsequies.
The honest Rook, with parson garb and book,
Officiates in dropping dust to dust.
The sweet-voiced Thrush did kindly volunteer
To sing the Psalm of Death from off the book.
And even the coward Kite did ask to be
Pall-bearer, seeing that he could see at night.
And last, not least, the Bull—a plain, blunt Bull,
Who loved his dear departed friend so well,
Had he had tears he would have shed them then,
But being a Bull he could but bellow, sore ;
Not sacred nor profane ; nor local Bull
From isle of green, or seven-hilled city, he ;
But rather, cosmopolitan and calm.
He was no orator, like Parson Rook ;
No prima donna, like to Ma'm'sel Thrush :
But what he was he was. The elements
So mixed in him, the birds flew up and sang,
"Behold a Bull!" And the Bull as a boon did beg
To send his strength in solemn sound around,
The death-knell swell, and toll the bell for Robin.
The earth lay all around them where to choose
His sepulchre. The honored vicinage
Saw never half so fine a funeral;
As two by two with fluttering wings they took
Through Fairmount Park their sorrowful, sad way !

"All the birds of the air
Fell to sighing and sobbing,
When they heard the bell toll
For poor Cock Robin !"

BOPEEPETINE.

THIS is the meadow mediæval. Lo! and the green grass a-growing
Shorter and longer and greener; and shorter and longer and greener—
Set to the rhythm of actinic rays, and the mouths of the grazers:
Grazes the horse and the cow and the sheep—ah! the sheep—here.
Memorable meadow, with typical tint of the mind most receptive;
Filled with sweet faith in, and thrilled by the legend religiously cherished;
Legend of Bopeepetine and her sheep, with their loss and her crosses;
Told at all times in all climes, unto rapt and charmed children.

This is the meadow mediæval. Hark! from afar come the voices
Plaintive, of sheep all aimlessly straying while peacefully playing,
Sportively, each with the other. And there—ah! there is the maiden,
Bopeepetine named, from her size, and her furtive and shy way of eyeing
Shepherds who gazed on her sighing, while wishing, perhaps, they might kiss her.
Maiden most mutely and utterly lost among leaves of the latest
And greatest of novels, what are you a-doing to do so? What mean you?

You, who should see to the safety of ever and ever so many
Of sheep you have charge of. Alas! as the deadliest snake's to the gentlest
Of birds, was the spell of the book that entranced for a space a weak maiden.
Say that a being's penumbra is felt as it touches and mingles
Circle with circle ethereal, and straightway we see without seeing:
Conscious, cognizant, impressed with a presence that reaches and touches
More lightly than light, and lo! we look up and discover his presence.
Suddenly starts she at feeling, not presence but absence, abstraction;
For exit and entrance, or sound and cessation of sound, like extremes meet.
Truly she starts, and with reason, since gone were the sheep—all the sheep gone!
Speechless the sheepless, shy shepherdess stands for an instant dumfounded.
Yea, irrevocably gone! "And my mother—my father—oh! what will become of me?
What has become of my sheep?" cries the maiden, Bopeepetine christened.
Wildly she runs to all points of the compass, and calls them, and calls them.
Fears half distract her, and tears wholly fill her shy eyes to o'erflowing,
As hither and thither, and whithersoever she fancies they may go,
Goes she a-looking, a-looking, ever and ever a-looking.

Prairie-like fields has she passed, and dense bushes and shrubbery skirted :
Many and many a brook has she forded whose innocent babble
Stung as an insult, for never a baa could she hear for their babble !
Under this tree shall she rest for refreshment, then rise and push forward.
Hark ! 'tis the sound, most delicious, melodious of sounds to our maiden—
The bleating of sheep in the distance, a sound most electric upon her.
Eagerly, gladly, and gaily Bopeepetine heard them, and starting,
Awoke from a dream so delusive ; and listens in vain for the bleating.
Oh ! cruel, most cruel and heartless deceiver ! to mock a meek maiden.
Grasping her crook with great firmness of manner, and look most determined,
Forth fares she fast, saying, "Find them I will, if it take until sunrise !"
Where could they hide from so searching an eye in a maid with a purpose
Single and fixed as a milestone, or star in the belt of Orion ?
What with the will and the way—she was wilful and wayward—how simple,
How easy the task !
So she found them, of course, and she shooed, and she shooed them
Homeward before her, with peace in her heart, perfect peace for a moment

Or two; till she sees that some miscreant mischief malicious
Had wrought, even mayhem. Oh, it were pitiful! once a whole hundred,
And now there was none. Not a vestige to tell of the wise adaptation.
Let silently fall as the twilight, a veil o'er her grief; and thus covered,
Leave her alone with her sorrow.

One morning Bopeepetine searching,
For early spring flowers in a billowy meadow adjoining her father's,
Suddenly sees the lost members, all gently in motion above her
On branch of the mulberry; swayed to and fro by the south and the west wind:
Thus unawares did she find them. [And thus we incessantly stumble
On nature's rare secrets, and seize them as prizes new fallen from heaven.]
She sees them and sighs, and those shyest of eyes are again overflowing.
Quickly she gathers such opportune fruit—what could she have better?
And quicklier flew over hill, over dale, like the wind from the northward;
Eager to render to each one the member dissevered; and thus far
Atone for a negligence brief, but so bitterly held in remembrance.
Lost is the art that assisted her full and complete restitution;

Lost is the skill that selected correctly the subject
and object;
But down to this very day known unto all men, and
women, and children—
Especially the children—the fact of the union, the
happy reunion,
Lives, and is fresh as at first.
Now lightly as dew, falls perfection
Of peace on the maiden, Bopeepetine. She, at the
hour of retiring,
Remembers to make to her evening devotion a fitting
addendum.

Still stands the meadow mediæval. Still doth the
maiden Bopeepetine,
Cross it with crook and the same harrassed look in
those shyest of eyes of hers.
Thousands are hearing her story, and drinking it in
with five senses;
Thousands of thousands have heard, and will hear
the same story over—
And little Bopeepetine's story makes each of its
hearers a lover!

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